

### SEARING PASSION, GRISLY VIOLENCE, AND A JEALOUS SOPRANO:

No story is more operatic than *Tosca*, and no opera is more thrillingly dramatic than Puccini's classic. The opera premiered in 1900, but the riveting story first appeared thirteen years before as a play by the French author Victorien Sardou. With the smoldering actress Sarah Bernhardt in the title role, Sardou's work toured Europe in a blaze of glory. Nevertheless, the play would likely have fallen into obscurity had the young Italian composer Giacomo Puccini not seen (and been deeply moved by) Bernhardt's blistering performance. With the help of his frequent collaborators Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, Puccini set about adapting Sardou's drama for the opera stage. Equal parts brutal thriller, tragic romance, and musical tour de force, Puccini's opera shocked and delighted audiences at its premiere and has remained among the world's most popular operas ever since.

The story unfurls in Rome in June, 1800. The Kingdom of Naples rules the city with an iron fist. Napoleon's armies rattle their sabers to the north. And in the midst of it all, one woman is forced to choose between political allegiance, personal ambition, and the people she loves. This new production by Sir David McVicar brings the opulence and splendor of the Eternal City to the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. Yet even as McVicar transports us back to the stormy Napoleonic era, *Tosca*'s story—about love, loyalty, human frailty, and superhuman strength—is every bit as timeless as Rome itself.

This guide presents *Tosca* as a musical thriller, inviting your students to explore how music, poetry, and stagecraft all contribute to a detailed and compelling story. It is designed to provide context, deepen background knowledge, and enrich the experience of the *Live in HD* performance. The materials on the following pages include biographical data about the composer, information on the opera's source and creation, and a series of activities that bring the opera and its music into the classroom. By presenting *Tosca* as a narrative work that has much in common with the novels, movies, and TV shows that your students consume every day, this guide will help students of all ages develop the confidence to engage with opera even after they leave the theater itself.

### THE WORK:

#### *TOSCA*

An opera in three acts, sung in Italian

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Based on the play *La Tosca* by Victorien Sardou

First performed January 14, 1900 at the Teatro Costanzi, Rome, Italy

### PRODUCTION

James Levine, Conductor

Sir David McVicar, Production

John Macfarlane,  
Set and Costume Designer

David Finn, Lighting Designer

Leah Hausman, Movement Director

### STARRING:

Sonya Yoncheva  
FLORIA TOSCA (soprano)

Vittorio Grigolo  
MARIO CAVARADOSSI (tenor)

Sir Bryn Terfel  
BARON SCARPIA (baritone)

Patrick Carfizzi  
SACRISTAN (bass)

Production a gift of Jacqueline Desmarais, in memory of Paul G. Desmarais Sr; The Paiko Foundation; and Dr. Elena Prokupets, in memory of her late husband, Rudy Prokupets

Major funding from Rolex



YONCHEVA



GRIGOLO



TERFEL



CARFIZZI

This guide includes five sections.

- **THE SOURCE, THE STORY, WHO'S WHO IN *TOSCA*, 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 *Tosca*:

- The historical aspects of *Tosca*'s setting and plot
- The inventiveness of Giacosa, Illica, and Puccini in adapting Sardou's spoken play for the operatic stage
- The opera's musical structure and Puccini's compositional techniques
- 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 *Tosca*, 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.

**SUMMARY** The escaped political prisoner Angelotti hides in a church, near where his friend, the artist Cavaradossi, is painting a new religious portrait. Cavaradossi promises to help Angelotti escape. Soon, Cavaradossi's girlfriend, the opera singer Floria Tosca, arrives. She is suspicious that he has been unfaithful, but Cavaradossi calms her fears, and she leaves. Cavaradossi then departs to help Angelotti. Just then, Baron Scarpia, the evil chief of police, arrives at the church. He believes that Cavaradossi and Angelotti are working together and devises a plan to trap them and win Tosca for himself. He convinces Tosca that Cavaradossi is involved with another woman. She leaves to confront him, and Scarpia has her followed.

That evening, Cavaradossi has been arrested and brought to Scarpia's palace. Tosca arrives just as Cavaradossi is being dragged to the torture chamber. Terrified by his screams, she begs Scarpia to save him. He makes an ugly proposal: If Tosca will give herself to him and reveal where Angelotti is hiding, he will release Cavaradossi. In desperation, Tosca agrees, and Scarpia describes how Cavaradossi will have to pretend to die in a mock execution. Tosca watches as Scarpia signs the papers that will guarantee their escape. Then, when Scarpia turns to embrace her, she grabs a knife from the table and plunges it into his heart.

Cavaradossi, in despair, is imprisoned. Tosca arrives and explains what has happened and how they will escape. She watches as the soldiers take aim and fire. Tosca rushes to Cavaradossi's side—and discovers Scarpia's final cruel trick: The bullets were real, and Cavaradossi is dead. Vowing to confront Scarpia before God, Tosca climbs to the top of the prison walls and throws herself to her death.



The Castel Sant'Angelo, located to the right of center in this historical photograph, is the setting for Act III.

## VOICE TYPE

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

### SOPRANO

the highest-pitched 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

## THE SOURCE: LA TOSCA, BY VICTORIEN SARDOU

Victorien Sardou's play *La Tosca* premiered at Paris's Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin in 1887. With a shamelessly thrilling plot and Sarah Bernhardt—the most famous actress in the world—in the lead role, its commercial success was all but assured. Puccini must have come across the play shortly after its premiere, since he tried to secure the rights for an operatic adaptation as early as 1889. But it was not until he saw Bernhardt perform the play in 1895 (in French) that Puccini seriously set to work. While the opera sticks closely to Sardou's plot, Puccini's librettists Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica excised much of the political backdrop to Sardou's play; the result is an opera utterly saturated with drama and emotion. In his work, Sardou included biographical details for the main characters that provide further insight into their backgrounds and motivations. Angelotti and Cavaradossi hail

from the Roman nobility, although both are supporters of Napoleon and the French Revolution. Angelotti's ancestors helped found the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle, where Angelotti takes refuge at the beginning of the opera. Cavaradossi was raised by Roman parents in Paris, where he studied art with the revolutionary painter Jacques-Louis David. Scarpia is a Sicilian, sent by the Queen of Naples to quell the revolutionary movement in Rome. And then there is Floria Tosca, the riveting heroine. Unlike the male leads, she is not of noble birth: She spent her childhood raising goats. After being taken in by a convent of Benedictine nuns, her musical talents were discovered by the (real-life) composer Domenico Cimarosa; he was so impressed by her singing that he convinced the pope to let her leave the convent and pursue a musical career.

## SYNOPSIS

**ACT I** *Rome, June 17, 1800, midday, the Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle.* The revolutionary Cesare Angelotti has just escaped from the Castel Sant'Angelo, a prison in the heart of Rome run by the sadistic Baron Scarpia, the corrupt chief of police. Angelotti seeks refuge in a nearby church. As it happens, the artist Mario Cavaradossi, himself a revolutionary sympathizer, has been painting a portrait in the very same church. When Cavaradossi sees Angelotti, he promises to help him escape, but, hearing someone approaching, he tells Angelotti to hide. It is Cavaradossi's girlfriend, the opera singer Floria Tosca. She coldly asks Cavaradossi why the door was locked; she heard him talking to someone and assumes it was a woman. Then she sees Cavaradossi's painting and flies into a jealous rage, since the woman in the painting looks nothing like her. Cavaradossi swears he does not even know the woman, much less love her. His heart belongs to Tosca alone. He manages to placate Tosca by complimenting her shamelessly, and the two plan to meet later that evening.





John Macfarlane's designs for the gown Tosca wears in Act II

Tosca departs, and Cavaradossi lets Angelotti out of his hiding place. Angelotti reveals that his sister has hidden women's clothes, a veil, and a fan for him in the church so he can escape Rome in disguise. Cavaradossi says that there is a hiding place in his garden well, and he and Angelotti head to the painter's house. Just then, word arrives: Napoleon has been defeated, and a great celebration has been planned for that evening. The joyful mood is quickly dampened, however, by the entrance of Scarpia. Guessing that Cavaradossi has helped Angelotti flee, he decides to take advantage of Tosca's jealousy to locate the escaped prisoner. Finding the fan left by Angelotti's sister, he suggests to Tosca that Cavaradossi must be having an affair with the owner of the fan. Blind with jealousy, Tosca storms out to confront Cavaradossi. Scarpia sends his agent Spoletta to follow her. As the curtain falls, he revels in the knowledge that not only will Cavaradossi and Angelotti be in his power, but Tosca will soon be his as well.

**ACT II** *That evening, the Palazzo Farnese.* Scarpia waits in his chambers. Soon, Spoletta enters. He found no trace of Angelotti, he says, but he did find and arrest Cavaradossi, who adamantly denies any knowledge of Angelotti's whereabouts. Tosca arrives just as Cavaradossi is being dragged away to the torture chamber. As Cavaradossi's screams reach her ears, Tosca becomes desperate. Scarpia says only she can save her beloved—by revealing where Angelotti is hidden. Confused and exhausted, Tosca reveals the location of the political prisoner: in the well in the garden. When a bloody Cavaradossi is brought back from the torture chamber, he is horrified to learn that Tosca



has betrayed Angelotti. Just then, a messenger arrives to announce that Napoleon was not, in fact, defeated at Marengo; rather, his forces have taken northern Italy. Cavaradossi exults in Napoleon's victory as he is dragged away to prison.

Alone with Tosca, Scarpia offers her a deal: He will release Cavaradossi if Tosca will succumb to his advances. Tosca is disgusted; she'd rather die than accept Scarpia's offer. Spoletta enters, and tells Scarpia that Angelotti killed himself before he could be captured, and Cavaradossi's execution has been planned for the following morning at dawn. Tosca realizes that with Angelotti already dead, Scarpia has no reason to keep Cavaradossi alive. Left with no other choice, she accepts Scarpia's offer, demanding Cavaradossi's immediate release and papers guaranteeing his safe escape from Rome. Scarpia replies that he cannot simply open the prison door and let Cavaradossi walk away; instead, he will order a mock execution, following which Cavaradossi will be able to escape unnoticed. Tosca watches as Scarpia gives instructions for the "execution" and signs the transit papers. On the table near her is a knife. When Scarpia turns to embrace her, she grabs the knife and plunges it into his heart.

**ACT III** *The following morning, the prison at the Castel Sant'Angelo.* Believing he will never see Tosca again, Cavaradossi bribes the jailer to take her a letter of farewell. To his surprise, however, Tosca enters, carrying the papers that will guarantee their safe escape from Rome. Hurriedly, she tells Cavaradossi about the mock execution that has been planned: At the sound of the guns, Cavaradossi must fall to the ground as though dead. Then, after the soldiers leave, they will be able to flee together. Tosca watches breathlessly as the firing squad gets into position. They fire. Cavaradossi falls. She rushes to him—only to discover Scarpia's final cruel trick. The execution was all too real, and Cavaradossi is dead. As soldiers storm in to arrest her for Scarpia's murder, Tosca climbs to the top of the battlements and throws herself to her death in the river below.

## WHO'S WHO IN TOSCA

CHARACTER		PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Floria Tosca	A singer	FLOH-ree-ah TOSS-kah	soprano	A famous opera singer, in love with the painter Cavaradossi. Unfortunately, her jealousy will lead to her downfall—and his.
Mario Cavaradossi	A painter	MAH-ree-oh kah-vah-rah-DOS-see	tenor	Tosca's beloved. He secretly supports the Napoleonic revolutionary cause and agrees to help Angelotti escape.
Baron Scarpia	Rome's chief of police	SCAR-pee-ah	baritone	Cruel and conniving, he plans to use Tosca's jealousy to destroy his enemies. Scarpia is one of the most famous baritone villains in all of opera.
Cesare Angelotti	A political prisoner, former Consul of Rome	CHEH-zah-reh ahn-jeh-LOT-tee	bass	A Roman revolutionary and sworn enemy of Scarpia's. When the opera begins, he has just escaped from prison and taken refuge in the church where Cavaradossi is working.
Spoletta	Scarpia's agent	spohl-LET-tah	tenor	Scarpia's right-hand man, he helps the vicious police chief carry out his wicked plans.





- 1858** Giacomo Puccini is born on December 22 in Lucca, a town on the western edge of Tuscany. As the oldest son in a family of seven children, Puccini is expected to go into the business at which his family has excelled for four generations: music.
- 1874** After completing a classical education, Puccini begins formal music studies with his uncle.
- 1880** Given his family background, Puccini's career in Lucca is all but assured. But the young composer has higher aspirations, and he moves to Milan to further his studies.
- 1883** The publisher Sonzogno announces a competition for young composers and Puccini submits his first opera, *Le Villi*. To his chagrin, he receives no prize at all, not even an honorable mention.
- 1884** Despite his disappointment in the Sonzogno competition, Puccini manages to find sponsors for a performance of *Le Villi* at the Teatro dal Verme, Milan's second most important opera house after La Scala. In the audience is Giulio Ricordi, head of the Ricordi publishing house, who is so taken with Puccini's work that he immediately signs an exclusive contract with the young composer.
- 1887** *La Tosca*, a new play by the French writer Victorien Sardou, premieres at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin in Paris on November 24. In the title role is Sarah Bernhardt, one of the leading actresses of the day. Designed to showcase the dramatic acting style of its star, the play features many scenes of depravity and trauma: torture, attempted rape, execution, and suicide.



- 1889** Puccini's second opera, *Edgar*, premieres at La Scala; it is the only true flop of Puccini's career. Puccini's sights are already set on other things, however, and he asks Ricordi to secure the rights to an opera based on Sardou's *La Tosca*.
- 1895** Sardou's *La Tosca* is performed in Florence, with Bernhardt in the lead role and Puccini in the audience. Deeply impressed, Puccini finally begins thinking seriously about an opera based on Sardou's play.
- 1896** Puccini's opera *La Bohème* premieres to resounding acclaim. It is the first of three operas that Puccini will write with the librettists Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, and the trio soon begins work on their next opera, *Tosca*.
- 1898** Giacosa and Illica complete the *Tosca* libretto. Puccini takes the libretto to Paris for Sardou's approval, which Sardou happily grants.
- 1900** On January 14, *Tosca* premieres in Rome. Despite a chilly critical reception, it is an instant hit with audiences. Two months later, it premieres at La Scala in Milan, conducted by Arturo Toscanini. In June, it receives its first international performance, in Buenos Aires; this is followed by a performance in London on July 12. And on February 4, 1901, it has its American premiere at the Metropolitan Opera.
- 1904** *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini's final opera with Giacosa and Illica, premieres at Milan's Teatro alla Scala.
- 1924** In October, Puccini is diagnosed with cancer and travels to Brussels for treatment. When he dies on November 29, the unfinished score of *Turandot* is still lying on his bedside table. His body is taken to Milan and temporarily interred in the Toscanini family crypt before being transferred to his estate at Torre del Lago.



Croatian soprano Milka Ternina was the Met's first Tosca in 1901.

## English/Language Arts

### IN PREPARATION

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

### CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

English/Language Arts, Poetry, Creative Writing, Music, Theater and Acting, Italian, French

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to the many artistic components of opera
- To deepen students' understanding of opera and theater as narrative art forms
- To foster active engagement with the opera's story and music
- To encourage students' own creativity in the areas of writing, music, and acting

## Murder, They Wrote

Operatic subjects and plots have been drawn from many sources: plays, fairy tales, novels—even the lives of tabloid celebrities. In all cases, however, an opera librettist is faced with challenges unique to the art form, since the libretto must ultimately be sung. In this activity, your students will examine how the libretto for Puccini's *Tosca* compares to its source play, *La Tosca* by Victorien Sardou, through an acting exercise, guided close reading, and an optional creative writing assignment. Students will:

- develop vocabulary relating to opera's creative components
- act out two different versions of the *Tosca* drama
- compare these two versions on paper and then consider how Puccini's music augments the drama of the libretto
- consider how different kinds of music might require different kinds of libretti
- create an opera libretto for a scene of their choosing

### STEPS

This activity invites students to consider the dramatic priorities of different art forms (namely, theater and opera) by performing and listening to excerpts from Sardou's *La Tosca* and Puccini's *Tosca*. They will examine how "dramatic" situations are depicted through words, music, and actions, and develop listening and viewing skills that will make the *Live in HD* broadcast more engaging and enjoyable. (Note, however, that the selected scene depicts a murder, and thus may not be appropriate for all students.)



John Macfarlane's designs for the gown Tosca wears in Act II

**STEP 1:** Begin by briefly explaining the many tasks that go into creating an opera.

- An existing story is selected, or an original story is written; the story may exist in any form: play, novel, movie, video games, etc. In the case of Puccini's opera, the source story comes from Sardou's play *La Tosca*.
- A script is crafted for the opera; this opera script is called a libretto, and the person who writes it is a librettist. (More information on the term "libretto" may be found in the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* in this guide.)
- A composer takes the libretto and writes melodies for all the words to be sung, as well as music for the orchestra.

In the course of this activity, students will follow this same creative process from beginning to end: Step 2 below focuses on the storyline, Steps 3–4 on the libretto, and Steps 5–6 on the music.

**STEP 2:** To ensure that students have an adequate understanding of *Tosca's* plot, distribute the synopsis to your students and ask them to take turns reading it aloud. (For younger students, the briefer "summary" included in this guide will be more accessible.)

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND *TOSCA*

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

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.3

Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.7

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

### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.9

Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).



Costume sketches for Cavaradossi and Scarpia

## REVOLUTIONARIES, ROYALISTS, AND ROME: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF *TOSCA*

### **The Battle of Marengo. Consul of the Roman Republic. General Melas.**

The historical references in *Tosca* pass so quickly that listeners are sometimes left scratching their heads. Yet knowing the intricacies of the turbulent politics of the late 1790s is crucial for understanding the opera's plot.

In 1796, an ambitious young French general named Napoleon Bonaparte launched his first military campaign in Italy. His progress was swift, and the French soon established satellite republics around Milan (the Cisalpine Republic, est. 1797), Genoa (the Ligurian Republic, est. 1797), Rome (the Roman Republic, est. 1798), and Naples (the Parthenopean Republic, est. 1799).

Napoleon banished the pope from Rome and sent the powerful Neapolitan queen

Maria Carolina—daughter of the Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa and sister of the murdered French queen Marie Antoinette—into exile in Sicily. Then, believing Italy was safely under French control, Napoleon headed to Egypt. In underestimating

Maria Carolina's determination to win back her lost territory, however, Napoleon made a fatal error. Once her nemesis was out of the way in North Africa, Maria Carolina attacked Naples with the full might of her army. She retook her home city and then turned her sights toward Rome. When the Roman Republic fell to Maria Carolina in September 1799, retribution against the Republic's supporters was swift. Thousands of people were rounded up and imprisoned or killed in the Castel Sant'Angelo. Rome was now governed from Naples, and the Neapolitan court sent (in Sardou's telling) the brutal Scarpia to bring the city to heel.

A few months later, Napoleon returned to Paris from Egypt. His first order of business was acquiring political power. He wrangled (through not entirely honest means) an appointment as First Consul of the French Republic, the most powerful position in France. Then he set about planning a military victory that would enhance his public image. In May 1800, he led his troops across the Swiss Alps and set up camp at Marengo, some 30 miles outside of Genoa, where he planned to meet the Austrian army in battle.

*Tosca's* contradictory reports of the battle's outcome may seem like only a clever narrative ploy, yet the reality was just as dramatic as anything Sardou could write. The expected battle came on June 14—but it was the Austrians who attacked the French, not the other way around. Due to faulty intelligence, Napoleon was caught completely off-guard. As the battle drew to a close it seemed that the Austrians, led by General Michael von Melas, had won a decisive victory. A messenger was dispatched to Vienna to share the good news. Napoleon asked his general, Louis-Charles Desaix, for an opinion: "It's three o'clock, the battle is lost," the general reportedly said, "but there's still time to win another battle." Napoleon turned his army around and launched a surprise attack on the exhausted Austrians. After many more hours of brutal fighting, the Austrian army capitulated, and Napoleon's victory was declared.



Maria Carolina, Queen Consort of Naples,  
painted by Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun

MUSÉE CONDÉ, CHANTILLY



**STEP 3:** Explain that writing a libretto presents special challenges because of opera’s unique characteristic: Its words are sung rather than spoken. Students should consider these important points regarding singing:

It is much easier to sing rhymed poetry with a regular rhythm than it is to sing irregular poetry or prose. By way of example, have your students sing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*. Then, have them use the following text when singing the same tune:

Galileo watched the stars  
through a telescope he built.  
For this reason he’s been called  
“father of astronomy.”  
Galileo watched the stars  
through a telescope he built.

Furthermore, it takes much longer to sing a line of text than it takes to say it. Have one of your students read the “Galileo” text above while the rest of the class times how long it takes. (Or have several students read the passage aloud and then calculate the average of all their times.) By way of comparison, have a group sing *Twinkle, Twinkle*, and time how long that takes. Both the spoken and sung text have exactly the same number of syllables, but singing *Twinkle, Twinkle* will likely take much longer than reading about Galileo.

**FUN FACT** After Puccini moved to Milan, he briefly shared a room with Pietro Mascagni, composer of the opera *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The two men were poor, and their abode was humble. Cooking in their small room was strictly forbidden, so the clever young musicians came up with a plan to avoid detection: While one handled the pots and pans, the other would bang loudly at the piano to drown out the noise.





**FUN FACT** Jacques-Louis David, the real-life artist with whom the fictional Mario Cavaradossi studied painting, was one of the most important painters of the Napoleonic era. Among his best-known works is a painting of Napoleon crossing the Alps on horseback, on his way to the Battle of Marengo. However, the glamorous image of Napoleon on the back of a rearing horse is not entirely accurate: due to harsh weather conditions, Napoleon actually crossed the mountain pass much less heroically on the back of a donkey.

**STEP 4:** Compare the text of a real play with a real opera libretto. Distribute the two versions of *Tosca* included in the reproducible handouts under the heading *Murder, They Wrote*. The scene depicted in both versions is Scarpia's murder, but one comes from Sardou's play while the other comes from Giacosa and Illica's libretto. Note that the opera libretto includes text in both Italian and English; students need focus only on the English portion for now.

In small groups, have your students act out the two versions, and ask them to consider how the two versions differ, specifically:

- Which version feels more dramatic?
- Which version is longer? What material was added or cut? Which version is easier to follow?
- How important are the stage directions in helping you understand what is going on? Would the words alone suffice?

Reconvene as a class and invite students to share their observations. Can they apply what they learned in the *Twinkle, Twinkle* exercise to explain some of the differences?

**STEP 5:** The final step of creating an opera is to add the music. Play for your students the scene that they have just acted out (**Tracks 1–2**), and ask them to follow along with the Italian text on their handout. As they listen, they should keep in mind everything they discovered and discussed in Steps 3 and 4. Encourage students to consider the following questions:

- Does the Italian text rhyme?
- Is the singing constant, or are there moments when only the orchestra is playing? What happens during those moments? Does the music seem to follow the action described in the stage directions?
- Does the music make the scene more exciting?
- *Tosca* is considered to be a role for a "dramatic soprano" (see the definition of "Fach" in the *Ten Essential Musical Terms*). Why might this be?

**STEP 6:** To bring the activity to a close, ask your students to consider how the libretto might have to change if the opera were set to a different kind of music: pop, hip-hop, country. Would they like to hear a version of *Tosca* that used music from another genre?

**FOLLOW-UP:** Divide your students into groups and ask them to pick a dramatic scene from a novel, movie, or other kind of story-telling medium, and turn it into an operatic scene. They will need to craft a libretto and come up with basic melodies, all while considering the many issues outlined above (should the libretto rhyme? what should the music sound like?). Finally, ask them to perform their new scene for the class.



## The Rooms Where It Happened: *Tosca's* Real-Life Settings

THE CHURCH OF SANT'ANDREA DELLA VALLE (pictured below), where Cesare Angelotti hides after escaping from the Castel Sant'Angelo in *Tosca's* Act I, was built between 1591 and 1665. Like many churches, its floor plan is in the shape of a cross. The long portion of the cross (known as the "nave") has chapels on either side. As was typical in the large churches and cathedrals of Europe, the decor and appointments for these side chapels were financed by noble families. In the world of *Tosca*, Angelotti's ancestors helped pay for the church's construction, and his in-laws, the Attavantis, funded one of the chapels. The church still stands to this day and boasts the second largest dome in Rome after St. Peter's Basilica.

THE PALAZZO FARNESE, where Scarpia interrogates Cavaradossi in Act II, was built for the Farnese family, one of the most powerful clans of Renaissance Italy. (In 1534, for instance, Alessandro Farnese became Pope Paul III; one of his major claims to fame was excommunicating the English king Henry VIII in 1538.) The building's main architect was Antonio da Sangallo, who began work on the palace in 1514; after Sangallo's death, it was continued by Michelangelo. Due to the convoluted laws of inheritance among noble families, the palace became the property of the Bourbon family of Naples in the 18th century. Since 1935, it has been the seat of the French embassy in Rome.

THE CASTEL SANT'ANGELO, an imposing building looming over the banks of the Tiber river, was built in the second century C.E. as a mausoleum for the Roman emperor Hadrian (76–139). After the fall of the Roman Empire, its (almost) impenetrable walls were repurposed: Beginning in the ninth century, it was used by popes as a safe haven when Rome was under siege. In the 16th century, Popes Alexander VI and Paul III (the Farnese pope mentioned previously) installed luxury private apartments in the fortress, and Pope Sixtus V used it as a treasury. Its cellar was used as a prison, and, as such, it held many notable enemies of the Inquisition—including Galileo Galilei. When Napoleon's troops took Rome in 1798, the Castel Sant'Angelo was overrun for the first time in its history. When the Royalists retook the city the following year, it held many supporters of the Napoleonic republic, including *Tosca's* fictional characters of Cesare Angelotti and later, Mario Cavaradossi. The structure's name, which means "Castle of the Holy Angel," comes from the imposing statue of the Archangel Michael on its roof, clearly visible in the Met production's set for Act III.



## Music

### IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide entitled *CSI: Tosca—Evidence* and *CSI: Tosca—Case File*, as well as the audio selections from *Tosca* available online or on the accompanying CD. Students will also need scissors and glue or tape, to collect and organize the “evidence” in the “case file.”

### CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Music, Literary Analysis, Close Reading, Drama, and Theater

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand and analyze Puccini’s musical choices
- To consider how music and text work together to tell a story
- To develop listening strategies for the *Live in HD* performance
- To encourage creative engagement with opera and other musical and narrative art forms

## CSI: *Tosca*

Murder, torture, suicide—*Tosca* has been called a thriller for good reason. Yet much of the opera’s power lies not in the blood and gore of the plot but in the subtle drama of human emotions created by Puccini’s riveting music. In this exercise, students will examine how Puccini’s music illuminates—and complicates—the multiple facets of the plot. Taking on the role of musical “detectives,” they will investigate evidence in the “case file” of *Tosca*’s murders and thereby develop familiarity with the plot and music of this scandalous operatic blockbuster. Students will:

- learn to identify several key musical motifs in *Tosca*
- apply their knowledge of these themes to deepen their understanding of the plot
- compare Puccini’s compositional techniques to film music and music in other narrative media with which they may be familiar

### STEPS

In this exercise, students will learn to recognize four musical motifs that occur in *Tosca* and analyze how recurring musical themes complicate the trajectory and deepen the drama of the plot. They will be introduced to new musical vocabulary and develop listening skills that will not only help them engage with the *Live in HD* performance, but also with music in film, theater, and even video games.

**STEP 1:** Distribute the opera synopsis to your students and ask them to read it carefully. (For younger students, the “summary” included in this guide will be more accessible.) Alternatively, you may choose to introduce the plot in a more active or game-based method. Regardless, it is important that students begin by having an understanding of *Tosca*’s plot. Next, begin an open discussion: What are some of the literary themes they see in the opera’s plot? Ask for specific moments in the action that demonstrate these themes, and make a list on the board of the themes your students have identified. Possible examples may include love, jealousy, self-sacrifice, betrayal, lust, and more.

**STEP 2:** Write a new vocabulary word on the board: **leitmotif**. Explain that leitmotifs (the word means “leading motif,” from the German verb *leiten*, “to lead”) are short snippets of music that represent specific ideas, characters, emotions, objects, or places in an opera. Composers use leitmotifs to allude to important themes, create connections between different moments in the plot, and



foster a sense of musical recognition. In this way, leitmotifs add an extra dimension to the story, allowing for more subtle allusions and connections than those explicitly stated by the characters through the words of the libretto.

Your students' job is to figure out what four of the leitmotifs in *Tosca* "mean." They should think of themselves as detectives: They will listen to 12 excerpts from *Tosca*, each of which represents a piece of "evidence." First, begin by playing each of the motifs (**Tracks 3–6**) several times, asking them to describe what they hear. It may be helpful to have them sing along with the melodies. Since the remainder of this activity relies on your students' ability to recognize the motifs when they occur, make sure that they feel comfortable identifying the excerpts before you move on.

Below are the four motifs, identified by number. Although musical excerpts are provided for those who wish to use them, it is far more important for your students to relate to the music in a way that will be meaningful to them: volume, speed, whether the excerpt sounds "happy" or "sad," etc. You may wish to teach your students more technical terms (such as "major," "minor," and "chord") to help them describe what they hear. (You may refer to the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* in this guide.) The four motifs are also provided in the reproducible handouts.

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND *TOSCA*

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.

## Motif 1: Scarpia Chords (Track 3)



- Three heavy, broken chords
- Unclear tonality: neither major nor minor
- Dissonance
- Brass instruments
- Possible adjectives: Harsh, blaring, imposing





**FUN FACT** The painter Jacques-Louis David is not the only historical figure in Sardou's play. According to Sardou, Tosca was "discovered" by the composer Domenico Cimarosa and sang her debut in an opera by Giovanni Paisiello (pictured above). Cimarosa (1749–1801) and Paisiello (1740–1816) were both highly successful composers of opera. Paisiello actually appears in Sardou's play, conducting Tosca's performance of one of his cantatas at the Palazzo Farnese. His presence at the event—meant to celebrate the (inaccurate) news of Napoleon's defeat—is rather puzzling: Paisiello had revolutionary tendencies himself, and was one of Napoleon's favorite composers.

## Motif 2: Tosca's Theme (Track 4)



- Major key
- An arc shape in the melody: first rising, then falling
- Possible adjectives: soaring, optimistic, quick

## Motif 3: Love Duet Theme (Track 5)



- Major key
- A large leap down, a step up, another large leap down, then a rising scale
- Possible adjectives: tender, gentle



## Motif 4: Murder Theme (Track 6)



- Minor key
- Fast notes at the beginning, followed by a big leap to a higher note
- Possible adjectives: Agitated, angry, dramatic

**STEP 3:** Next, Distribute the reproducible handout *CSI: Tosca—Evidence*, available at the end of this guide. Explain that all of the lyrics come directly from the *Tosca* libretto; when no sung text is present, there is an explanation of the action happening on stage (called a “stage direction”). Ask your students to guess where each excerpt fits in the opera’s plot. (If you like, you may give students a hint that the excerpts are listed in the order that they appear in the opera.)

Moving on to the musical excerpts that incorporate the motifs, play each of the excerpts in order. Ask your students to identify the motif they hear in the excerpt and write the number of the motif in the space provided. Also ask them to circle, underline, or otherwise mark which words the motif accompanies (for instance, the word “love”). They may need to listen to each excerpt a few times before they can confidently identify the motif; an answer key is provided below for your reference.

Excerpt #1 (Track 7)	Motif 1
Excerpt #2 (Track 8)	Motif 2
Excerpt #3 (Track 9)	Motif 2
Excerpt #4 (Track 10)	Motif 3
Excerpt #5 (Track 11)	Motif 1
Excerpt #6 (Track 12)	Motif 3
Excerpt #7 (Track 13)	Motif 4
Excerpt #8 (Track 14)	Motif 1
Excerpt #9 (Track 15)	Motif 4
Excerpt #10 (Track 16)	Motif 3
Excerpt #11 (Track 17)	Motif 3
Excerpt #12 (Track 18)	Motif 4

**FUN FACT** The Italian authors Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica are now remembered primarily for their work writing plays and librettos, yet as young men neither seemed to be destined for the literary arts. Giacosa attended law school. Illica’s early years were far more colorful: As a young man, he ran away from home to become a sailor, and in 1876, he even fought in a sea battle against the Ottoman Army.



John Macfarlane’s designs for a background character’s costume in Act I



**FUN FACT** Puccini was a great lover of modern technologies and inventions. Numerous photographs show him as a dapper gentleman behind the wheel of an automobile, and one even shows him driving a motorboat!

**STEP 4:** Now distribute the reproducible handout *CSI: Tosca—Case File*. Have your students cut out the “evidence cards” from the *CSI: Tosca—Evidence* handout, and attach them to the correct “Case File” (i.e., gather together all of the excerpts that include Motif 1, all of the excerpts with Motif 2, etc.).

**STEP 5:** Place your students in small groups, and ask them to work together to figure out what each motif “means.” You may wish to assign specific motifs to each group or ask each group to work on all four motifs. Using the blackboard, write the following questions out for the class so that students may use them to facilitate discussion and guide their analysis:

- Does the motif seem to be associated with a particular character? If so, does it occur when that character appears? When he or she is singing? When he or she is mentioned by another character?
- Are the melodies sung by characters on stage? Do they occur as background music?
- Do the excerpts for each motif come from a single scene or act, or are they distributed across the opera?
- Do the motifs ever seem to indicate that a character is remembering something from their past? Do they ever seem to foretell something that will happen in the future?

Space is provided on students’ *Case File* handout for them to make notes on their observations and deductions.

**STEP 6:** Have each group of students present their findings. Write these on the board next to the original list of themes. Invite them to compare the two lists. Has their musical analysis added anything to their interpretation of the plot? Has it made any characters seem more interesting or complex? Has it clarified anything? Ask whether they have any final observations they’d like to make.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Leitmotifs are not only used in opera. As a concluding discussion, ask your students whether they can think of any other storytelling media that also use leitmotifs. Film is a good example (think of the theme that accompanies Darth Vader in *Star Wars*, the Mordor theme in *Lord of the Rings*, or the tune that indicates the shark in *Jaws*), but students will likely also think of examples from TV shows, video games, and plays or musicals. How does a repeating theme affect their experience of those art forms and media? Finally, point out that opera is not all that different from movies and the other forms of entertainment they enjoy every day: It may be in a foreign language and feature a particular style of singing, but its methods of storytelling and demonstrating character are not all that different than the media that students engage with every day!



## It Sounds So Natural: Tosca and Verismo

*“Last night I went to see Puccini’s opera Tosca. ... What a work! In the first act there is a religious parade accompanied by the endless clanging of bells. ... In the second act a man is tortured (horrible screams!), while another is stabbed by a sharp bread knife. In the third act we see, from the roof of a citadel, a view of Rome—accompanied by more bang-bang-bonging of bells—and then a man is shot by a firing squad.”*

This is how the composer and conductor Gustav Mahler described *Tosca* in a 1903 letter to his wife.\* The description was not meant to be complimentary. Mahler, like many critics in the years after *Tosca*’s premiere, found the opera to be filled with cheap thrills. Yet to focus on the pejorative tone of the description is to overlook a fascinating aspect of *Tosca*, one that Mahler himself clearly noticed—the inclusion of “natural” sounds.

Many Italian opera composers of the late-19th and early-20th centuries subscribed to an aesthetic philosophy known as verismo, or “naturalism” (from the Italian word “vero,” “true”). The idea was adopted from French literature, which in the 19th century took special pains to tell “realistic” stories of poverty and the deprivations of the destitute. For opera composers, this new ideal was a major departure

from the status quo: Since its inception, the genre had been neatly split into “serious opera,” which focused on mythological figures and ancient nobility, and “comic opera,” which depicted clever members of the lower classes outwitting their idiotic rich counterparts. Composers of “veristic” opera, on the other hand, sought to show the urban poor as they “really” lived, and explored areas of society previously ignored on the stage: in addition to the poor, the lower-class and the criminal. As in Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana*—one of the paradigmatic examples of operatic verismo—such characters could be driven by passion to defy reason, morality, and the law.

Yet *Tosca* is not a story of dire poverty or social ills, as most of the characters come from noble families. Nevertheless, Puccini wished to tell his story as realistically as possible, and in this case, that meant including sounds that would make the opera seem true to life.



Édouard Manet’s *Execution of Emperor Maximilian*  
COURTESY KUNSTHALLE MANNHEIM

In addition to the bells, gunshots, and screams that Mahler mentions, audiences hear a cannon shot (when Angelotti’s escape is discovered) and a shepherd boy singing on the hills outside Rome. In fact, Puccini took pains to make the sounds as realistic as possible. He asked a priest for details about the *Te Deum*, the celebratory sacred hymn sung by choir boys in Act I. He asked a musician at the Vatican about the exact

itches of the bells at St. Peter’s and even took a special journey to hear what Rome’s bells sounded like from the roof of the Castel Sant’Angelo. And the song of the shepherd boy in Act III (which, along with the morning bells, signals to Cavaradossi and the audience that dawn is approaching) is not in standard Italian, but in the Roman dialect that would have been spoken by a simple local boy minding his flock of sheep.

\*Quoted in Josiah Fisk, ed., *Composers on Music: Eight Centuries of Writings*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Northeastern University Press), 192.

# Ten Essential Musical Terms

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

**Cantata** A multi-movement musical work for voice and instrumental accompaniment. Cantatas typically consist of several arias for soloists, and often numbers for chorus as well. The term, which literally means “sung music” in Italian, has been applied to both sacred and secular compositions since the 16th century. In Act I of *Tosca*, it is announced that Tosca will sing a cantata at the Palazzo Farnese to celebrate Napoleon’s defeat. As an opera singer, it makes sense that Tosca would also sing cantatas, since cantata arias often require as much virtuosity as their operatic counterparts.

**Chord** A combination of notes sounded simultaneously, usually comprised of at least three different pitches. The triad, a type of chord built from a root pitch with two thirds arranged above it, is the basic building block of harmony. Chords may be consonant (in which case they sound stable and pleasant) or dissonant (in which case they sound unstable and harsh).

**Dynamics** The relative intensity in the volume of musical sound. When indicated in a score, dynamics are communicated by a set of standard Italian terms and symbols: **f** for forte, **p** for piano, **mf** for mezzo-forte, and so on. The concept of dynamics comprises not only the degree of loudness, but also the movement between different volume levels: Crescendo means “growing louder,” and diminuendo means “growing softer.”

**Fach** A German term meaning “vocal category” (the “-ch” is pronounced like a raspy H). Singers are generally classified according to the pitches they can comfortably sing. Yet different roles, even when written for the same vocal range, can place different demands on a singer’s volume, stamina, and agility. Thus, singers are often categorized according to the roles most suited to their voices. The character of Tosca is one of the great examples of a “dramatic soprano,” as the role demands tremendous power and a dark tonal color. Cavaradossi is a “dramatic tenor,” since his music includes lots of high-flying melodies.

**Leitmotif** Literally “leading theme” in German, a leitmotif is a recurring musical motto that represents a person, place, emotion, idea, object, or any other element in a musical work. The use of leitmotifs helps give structural unity to a composition, and they may be combined to form a dense web of thematic material. The idea originated in the mid-19th century and is especially associated with the work of Richard Wagner, a composer whose operas Puccini greatly admired.

**Libretto** The text of an opera or staged musical drama, comprising all spoken words and stage directions. By contrast, the opera’s music in written or printed form is called a score. Literally “little book” in Italian, the word refers to the centuries-old practice of printing a small book with the text to an opera, which was available for sale prior to a performance. A related word, “librettist,” refers to the artist who creates the words for the composer to set to music, either adapting them from an existing source, or writing original material. Often a librettist would have completed his work before the composer began to set it to music, but there were also many composers and librettists who worked very closely together.

**Major and Minor** Western music written since around 1600 has been built on two ways of organizing pitches: major and minor. The terms can be used to describe scales, intervals, chords, or keys. Music composed in a major key typically sounds bright, cheery, or optimistic, while pieces in a minor key may sound somber, plaintive, or sinister.

**Te Deum** A chant in praise of God sung in the Catholic religious rite during morning prayers on Sundays and feast days, as well as during religious processions and as a hymn of thanks after a victory on the battlefield. In Act I of *Tosca*, the choir boys are called to sing a Te Deum in celebration of Napoleon’s defeat (and, hence, the Austrian victory) at the Battle of Marengo. The text of the hymn likely dates back to the fourth century C.E.

**Tempo** Literally meaning “time” in Italian, tempo refers to the speed of a piece of music. It is indicated in a score by a variety of conventional (often Italian) words that not only provide direction on the composer’s desired rate of speed, but also carry associations of gesture and character. Additional tempo markings may indicate when a composer asks for a section of music to speed up or slow down.

### 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 *Tosca*, the first activity sheet, *A Guide to Tosca's Rome* invites your students to write a guidebook to the locations featured in *Tosca*. First, they will describe their favorite aspects of the buildings (i.e., the stage sets) for their prospective readers. Then they should explain to future visitors where important events in the opera took place (for instance, “notice the Attavanti chapel, with a painting by the great artist Mario Cavaradossi,” or “above your heads, you’ll see the parapet from which the famous soprano Floria Tosca jumped to her death”).

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.

#### IN PREPARATION

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

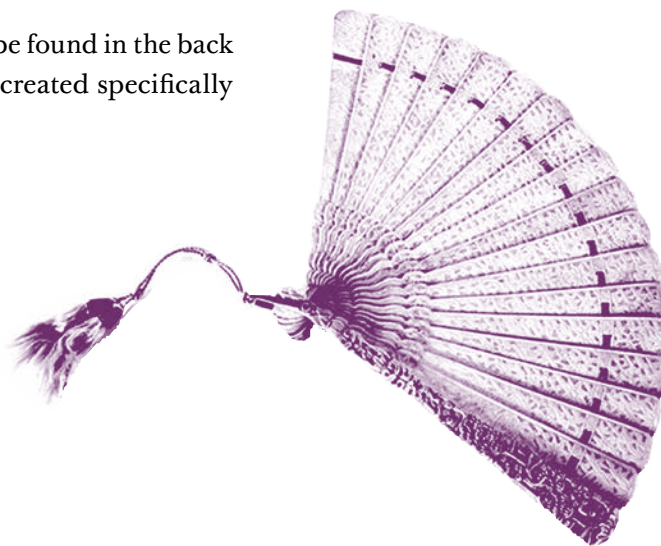
#### COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND TOSCA

##### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3

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

##### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5

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



## Hero or Antihero? Ethics and Empathy in *Tosca*

### IN PREPARATION

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

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To review students' understanding of *Tosca*
- To discuss how the many aspects of an opera performance work together to bring the story to life
- To foster empathy with the characters and consider the ethics of the plot
- To encourage students to apply what they have learned watching the opera to their own creative and intellectual endeavors

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND *TOSCA*

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.c

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4

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

Start the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did students 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 *Tosca* experts.

After students have seen the opera, it will also be a good time to engage, in a safe but serious way, some of the more difficult aspects of *Tosca*. While the opera is full of drama, excitement, and gloriously beautiful music, it is important not to overlook the brutality of the plot. The following questions are not meant to dampen the enthusiasm your students may feel for *Tosca*: It's a wonderful opera! Rather, the questions are meant to help them develop a critical apparatus for responsibly consuming entertainment of all kinds.



- Begin by asking your students for impressions of *Tosca*'s characters: Are they courageous? Impressive? Silly? Tragic? Mean? Good or bad role models?
- Why? What aspects of the opera and its performance led them to this conclusion: the libretto, the music, the acting, the stage sets, effects such as fake blood, something else?



- Did Puccini’s music change how you felt about the actions taking place on stage?
- Were students surprised by how they responded to any characters during the *Live in HD* broadcast? Did they find any characters scarier or more sympathetic than they expected?
- Do they agree with how the characters confront the challenges they face? Some particular points to consider include Cavaradossi’s decision to help Angelotti, Tosca’s decision to kill Scarpia, and Scarpia’s decision to trick Tosca about the fake execution. Are their decisions understandable? Are they justifiable?
- Have students seen or read any TV shows, movies, plays, or novels in which characters face similar challenges? How did those characters respond? Did their responses seem more or less justified than those of the characters in *Tosca*?

Your students may enjoy considering how the plot might change if *Tosca* were set in a different time or place. (It may be helpful to review the sidebar *Revolutionaries, Royalists, and Rome*, to see how the plot reflects specific political events of 1800.) Which plot points would need to be revised, and which could stay the same? Why? Some hypothetical settings include Ancient Greece or Rome, the American Revolution, and the United States in the current day.

Lastly, remember that opera is a multi-media art form: Any and all aspects of the performance your students have just seen—including the act of seeing it broadcast live from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House—are important factors contributing to the overall experience. Ask them for any final thoughts and impressions. What did they find most memorable?

**FUN FACT** Although Victorien Sardou’s early plays were satirical comedies, he spent most of his career writing emotionally fraught historical dramas like *Tosca*. These works were wildly popular with paying audiences but not always appreciated by critics. The English essayist George Bernard Shaw even coined a term to refer to the overwrought drama of Sardou’s plays (and the plays of others like him): “Sardoodledom.” And Shaw was no fan of *Tosca*, calling it an “empty-headed turnip ghost of a cheap shocker.”



John Macfarlane’s designs for background characters’ costumes in Act I

**Excerpts taken from the  
Metropolitan Opera broadcast of  
November 9, 2013**

**TOSCA**

Patricia Racette

**CAVARADOSSI**

Roberto Alagna

**SCARPIA**

George Gagnidze

**SACRISTAN**

John Del Carlo

**SPOLETTA**

Eduardo Valdes

**CONDUCTED BY**

Riccardo Frizza

Metropolitan Opera Orchestra  
and Chorus

- 1 Conclusion to Act II
- 2 Conclusion to Act II, continued
- 3 Motif 1: Scarpia Chords
- 4 Motif 2: Tosca's theme
- 5 Motif 3: Love duet theme
- 6 Motif 4: Murder theme
- 7 Excerpt #1: Motif 1
- 8 Excerpt #2: Motif 2
- 9 Excerpt #3: Motif 2
- 10 Excerpt #4: Motif 3
- 11 Excerpt #5: Motif 1
- 12 Excerpt #6: Motif 3
- 13 Excerpt #7: Motif 4
- 14 Excerpt #8: Motif 1
- 15 Excerpt #9: Motif 4
- 16 Excerpt #10: Motif 3
- 17 Excerpt #11: Motif 3
- 18 Excerpt #12: Motif 4



## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## Murder, They Wrote

### *La Tosca*, play by Victorien Sardou: Act IV, Scenes 4 & 5

*Spoletta appears at the door*

SPOLETTA: Should I go get Cavaradossi?

TOSCA: Oh, no! No!

SCARPIA: *(to Spoletta)* Wait!... *(he approaches Tosca, who recoils, and addresses her)* You have one minute to make up your mind!

TOSCA: *(cowering on the sofa)* It's all over! ... Everything is against me! ... It's over!

SCARPIA: *(whispering in her ear)* Well?

*Silence.*

TOSCA: *(after a pause, in a weak voice)* Yes!

*She bursts into tears, and presses her face into the cushions on the sofa.*

SCARPIA: *(standing up)* Captain, I've changed my mind. The executioner can go to bed. We will not hang Cavaradossi, leave him in his cell.

*Spoletta turns back to the policemen who accompany him, and at his command they depart. He alone remains in the room.*

TOSCA: *(quietly, to Scarpia)* I want him freed immediately.

SCARPIA: *(just as quietly)* Calm down, Tosca! We need to be more subtle than that! Here is the prince's order, which I must obey. *(showing her the paper)* My only choice in the matter is the means of execution, and we will turn that to our advantage. To everyone—excepting this man, my trusted servant—Cavaradossi must appear to be dead.

TOSCA: And you promise that afterwards... you'll help him escape?

SCARPIA: This is the order I will give. *(to Spoletta)* Spoletta, close the door! *(Spoletta does so)* Now listen carefully! Cavaradossi will not be hanged, but shot by firing squad... *(Tosca jumps up)*...in the courtyard of the Castel Sant'Angelo, just like we did with Palmieri.

SPOLETTA: So, Sir, an execution?

SCARPIA: A fake execution... Exactly like you did for Palmieri!

SPOLETTA: I understand perfectly, Sir.

SCARPIA: Get twelve men from your company, and load their guns yourself—but powder only, no bullets, and do it very carefully...

SPOLETTA: Yes, Sir.

SCARPIA: Cavaradossi will be told exactly how to play his role. He will be led to the platform, with no witnesses present but you and your men. The firing squad will shoot and he will fall to the ground as though dead. You yourself will check the body to confirm that he is dead, and that there is no need to finish the job with a pistol; then you will dismiss your men. Then, with a cloak over his shoulders and a hat pulled down over his eyes, you will lead Cavaradossi out of the castle and into the carriage which the lady here will have waiting. You'll climb into the carriage with him, and it will carry you to the city gate, which will be opened for you on my order. Once outside the city walls you'll leave them to go their own way and you will return home. I'll take care of everything else. Understand?

SPOLETTA: Yes, Sir!

SCARPIA: The guns...?

SPOLETTA: I will load them myself. Should I go do it now?

SCARPIA: Not yet! Let him wait.

TOSCA: *(in a low voice)* I want to see him, and tell him myself what we've agreed on.

SCARPIA: Very well. *(to Spoletta)* The lady may move freely about the castle and leave when she pleases. Place a man at the bottom of the stairs, he will lead her to the prison. Only after she has spoken with Cavaradossi and gotten back to her carriage will you proceed with the execution... as I explained...

SPOLETTA: I understand, Sir.

SCARPIA: Then go... Don't forget any detail. I am not to be disturbed unless I call.

*Spoletta salutes and leaves, closing the door, which Scarpia immediately locks. As the door slams shut and the bolt rattles into place, Tosca shudders and rises shakily to her feet.*

## TOSCA

.....

### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## Murder, They Wrote (CONTINUED)

SCARPIA: (*sitting back down on the couch*) Is that everything you wanted?

TOSCA: (*weakly, her voice trembling*) No!

SCARPIA: What else?

TOSCA: (*with great effort*) I want a letter of transit, which will assure us safe passage out of Rome and out of the Papal States.

SCARPIA: Fair enough!

*He goes to the writing desk. Tosca approaches the dinner table and, with a trembling hand, takes Scarpia's wine glass. As she raises the glass to her lips she sees on the table a sharp knife.*

SCARPIA: (*reading aloud what he has written*) "To whom it may concern: allow Madame Floria Tosca and the gentleman who accompanies her to freely leave the city of Rome and the Papal States. Signed, Vitellio Scarpia, Chief of Police of Rome." Satisfied?

*He hands her the paper, which she stares at with lowered gaze. He stands beside her, very close. Tosca, pretending to read, places the glass back on the table and begins to move her hand slowly toward the knife.*

TOSCA: Yes, fine.

SCARPIA: Well then, I get my reward! (*coming forward to embrace her.*)

TOSCA: Here's your reward! (*She plunges the knife into his heart.*)

SCARPIA: Oh! Curse you! (*He falls onto the sofa.*)

TOSCA: (*with a ferocious laugh*) Finally! It's done! At last! At last! Oh, it's done!

SCARPIA: Help me! I'm dying!

TOSCA: As you should, assassin! You put me through a long night of torture; now it's my turn! (*She leans over him, staring him in the eyes.*) Look me in the eyes, you scoundrel! See me exult in your agony! And you, you coward, here you are dying at the hand of a woman! Die, animal! Die desperate and mad! Die!... Die!... Die!...

SCARPIA: (*on the sofa, grabbing the knife. He and Tosca face each other over the back of the couch, and he says in a strangled voice*) Help me! Help!

TOSCA: (*rising and going toward the door*) Scream all you want! Your blood will choke you! No one can hear you!

*Scarpia makes one final effort to rise. Tosca leaps toward the sofa and grabs the knife again. They lock eyes for another moment, he dying, she full of fury. Scarpia falls back onto the sofa, groans, and slips to the floor. She places the knife on the table, coldly.*

TOSCA: At last! (*She moves the candle to look at Scarpia's face. He dies.*) Now I absolve you.

*Without taking her eyes off Scarpia, she wipes her fingers on the edge of the table cloth. She takes a water pitcher, dampens a napkin, and tries to wipe a spot of blood off her dress, then tosses the napkin to the floor beside the fireplace. She goes to the mirror, takes a candle, and fixes her hair.*

TOSCA: And to think that a whole city used to tremble before him! (*In the distance bells begin to sound reveille.*) The bells! Dawn!... Already?

*She crosses between the table and Scarpia's dead body, then blows out the candle nearest her. She takes the transit papers from the table and slips them into her dress. She listens at the door. She is about to walk out, but sees one candle is still burning. She relights the other candle and places them both on the floor on either side of the dead body. She spots a crucifix on the wall, takes it down, and places it on Scarpia's chest. She stands, opens the door quietly, and slips into the dark hallway. She listens carefully, then closes the door just as the drums in the citadel begin to sound.*

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## Murder, They Wrote (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 1

*Someone knocks at the door*

SCARPIA: Chi è là?

SPOLETTA: *(entering in a hurry)* Eccellenza, l'Angelotti al nostro giungere si uccise.

SCARPIA: Ebbene, lo si appenda morto alle forche! E l'altro prigionier?

SPOLETTA: Il cavalier Cavaradossi? È tutto pronto, eccellenza!

TOSCA: *(to herself)* Dio m'assisti!

SCARPIA: *(to Spoletta)* Aspetta. *(softly, to Tosca)* Ebbene?

*Tosca nods, then bursts into tears and presses her face into the cushions on the sofa.*

SCARPIA: *(to Spoletta)* Odi...

TOSCA: *(interrupting him)* Ma libero all'istante lo voglio!

SCARPIA: *(to Tosca)* Occorre simular. Non posso far grazia aperta. Bisogna che tutti abbian per morto il cavalier. *(indicating Spoletta)* Quest'uomo fido provvederà.

Who goes there?

Your honor, Angelotti killed himself as soon as we arrived.

That's just fine. Hang his dead body from the prison gate. And the other prisoner?

The Cavalier Cavaradossi? He is all ready, your honor!

God help me!

Wait. And so?

Listen...

I want him freed immediately!

We still have to put on a show of it. I can't be so obvious. Everyone needs to think that he has died. We can trust this man to make it happen...



John Macfarlane's designs for Scarpia's costume

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Murder, They Wrote (CONTINUED)

TOSCA: Chi m'assicura?

SCARPIA: L'ordin ch'io gli darò voi qui presente. (*turning to Spoletta*) Spoletta: chiudi. (*Spoletta closes the door quickly and comes back to Scarpia.*) Ho mutato d'avviso... (*Scarpia gives Spoletta a meaningful look. He nods his head to indicate that he has guessed Scarpia's meaning.*) Il prigionier sia fucilato. (*Tosca jumps up*) Attendi... Come facemmo del conte Palmieri...

SPOLETTA: Un'uccisione...

SCARPIA: (*right away, with marked intention*) ...simulata! Come avvenne del Palmieri! Hai ben compreso?

SPOLETTA: Ho ben compreso.

SCARPIA: Va'.

TOSCA: (*who has been listening closely, interrupts*) Voglio avvertirlo io stessa.

SCARPIA: E sia. (*to Spoletta, indicating Tosca*) Le darai passo. Bada: all'ora quarta...

SPOLETTA: (*with a knowing nod*) Sì. Come Palmieri... (*He exits. Scarpia listens as Spoletta's footsteps die away. Then his features and demeanor turn lecherous as he approaches Tosca.*)

SCARPIA: Io tenni la promessa...

TOSCA: Non ancora. Voglio un salvacondotto onde fuggir dallo stato con lui.

SCARPIA: Partir dunque volete?

TOSCA: Sì, per sempre!

SCARPIA: Si adempia il voler vostro. (*Scarpia goes to his desk.*) E qual via scegliete?

TOSCA: La più breve!

SCARPIA: Civitavecchia?

TOSCA: Sì.

(*As he writes the transit papers, Tosca approaches the dinner table and, with a trembling hand, takes Scarpia's wine glass. When she raises the glass to her lips, she notices on the table a sharp knife. She glances at Scarpia, who is focused on his writing, and very cautiously reaches toward the knife, takes it and hides it behind her as she leans against the table. She never takes her eyes off Scarpia. He finishes writing, places the seal on the letter, and then turns toward Tosca, opening his arms to embrace her.*)

How can I be sure?

I will give him his orders right here in front of you.  
Spoletta, shut the door.  
I've changed my mind.

The prisoner will be shot.  
But wait...Just like we did for Count Palmieri.

An execution...

...a fake one! Just like what happened to Palmieri.  
You understand?

I know just what you mean.

Go.

I want to warn him myself.

Go ahead. Let her through.  
Just watch: at four o'clock...

Yes. Just like Palmieri...

I kept my end of the bargain...

Not yet. I want passports so that I can flee the country with him.

You really want to leave?

Yes, forever.

Your wish is my command.  
Which road will you take?

The shortest!

To Civitavecchia?

Yes.

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## Murder, They Wrote (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 2

**SCARPIA:** Tosca, finalmente mia!... *(His lustful boast suddenly changes into a terrible scream—Tosca has plunged the knife into his chest)* Maledetta!

**TOSCA:** Questo è il bacio di Tosca!

**SCARPIA:** *(with a strangled voice)* Aiuto! Muoio! *(He sways on his feet and tries to grab Tosca, but she steps back, horrified.)* Soccorso! Muoio!

**TOSCA:** *(with hatred in her voice)* Ti soffoca il sangue? *(Scarpia tries to pull himself upright, grabbing the sofa.)* E ucciso da una donna! M'hai assai torturata!... Odi tu ancora? Parla!... Guardami!... Son Tosca!... o Scarpia!

**SCARPIA:** Soccorso, aiuto! Muoio! *(Choking on blood, he makes one final effort to rise, then falls back, dead.)*

**TOSCA:** *(leaning over Scarpia)* Muori dannato! Muori, Muori! È morto! Or gli perdono!

*(Without taking her eyes off the dead body, Tosca goes to the table, takes a carafe of water, and, wetting the tablecloth, uses it to wipe off her fingers. She gazes into the mirror and fixes her hair. She remembers the transit papers. She searches for them on the desk but can't find them. She looks around—then she sees them, in Scarpia's clenched hand. She kneels down, lifts his arm, takes the papers, and lets his arm fall, limp and lifeless, back onto the floor.)*

**TOSCA:** E avanti a lui tremava tutta Roma!

*(She heads toward the door, then thinks for a moment and goes to take the two candles that stand on the mantelpiece and lights them at the candelabra on the table, which she then extinguishes. She places a lighted candle at each side of Scarpia's head. She looks around once again, takes a crucifix from the wall, and, carrying it solemnly, kneels to place it on Scarpia's chest. Drums sound in the distance. Tosca rises and walks out of the room, carefully closing the door behind her.)*

Tosca is finally mine!

Damn you!

This is Tosca's kiss!

Help! I'm dying!

Help me!

I'm dying!

Are you choking on your own blood?

Killed by a woman!

You tortured me so much! Can you still hear me? Speak!

Look at me! I am Tosca, Scarpia!

Help! Help! I'm dying!

Die, you devil! Die! Die!

He's dead! Now I forgive him!

All of Rome cowered before him!

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

#### CSI: Tosca—Motifs

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##### Motif 1: Scarpia Chords (Track 3)



- Three heavy, broken chords
- Unclear tonality: neither major nor minor
- Dissonance
- Brass instruments
- Possible adjectives: harsh, blaring, imposing

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##### Motif 2: Tosca's Theme (Track 4)



- Major key
- An arc shape in the melody: first rising, then falling
- Possible adjectives: soaring, optimistic, quick



## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

#### CSI: Tosca—Motifs (CONTINUED)

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#### Motif 3: Love Duet Theme (Track 5)

CAV. Mia To - sca ido - la - tra - ta, o - gni  
co - sa in te mi pia - ce;

*p*  
*d tempo*

- Major key
- A large leap down, a step up, another large leap down, then a rising scale
- Possible adjectives: tender, gentle

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#### Motif 4: Murder Theme (Track 6)

*AND<sup>te</sup> SOSTENUTO* ♩ = 52  
*PPP*

- Minor key
- Fast notes at the beginning, followed by a big leap to a higher note
- Possible adjectives: agitated, angry, dramatic

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Evidence

### TRACK 7

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #1

The opening chords of the opera, played as the curtain rises.

Motif Identification: \_\_\_\_\_

### TRACK 8

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #2

TOSCA: *(a voice heard from outside)* Mario!

Mario!

CAVARADOSSI: *(Pretending to be calm, he opens the door for Tosca.)*  
Son qui!

Here I am!

TOSCA: *(entering, looking suspiciously around)* Perché chiuso?

Why was the door closed?

CAVARADOSSI: *(with feigned indifference)* Lo vuole il Sagrestano...

The Sacristan wants it that way.

TOSCA: A chi parlavi?

Who were you talking to?

CAVARADOSSI: A te!

To you!

TOSCA: Altre parole bisbigliavi. Ov'è?

You were whispering something else. Where is she?

CAVARADOSSI: Chi?

Who?

TOSCA: Colei! Quella donna!

Her! That woman!

Motif Identification: \_\_\_\_\_

### TRACK 9

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #3

TOSCA: *(sweetly chiding Mario for kissing her in a church)*

Oh! innanzi alla madonna... no, Mario mio, lascia pria che la  
preghi, che l'infiuri...

Oh! In front of the Madonna... no, Mario! Leave me alone  
so I can pray to her and leave her flowers.

*(She approaches the painting of the Virgin Mary, and carefully  
arranges on the altar the flowers she brought with her. She kneels  
and prays with great devotion, and then crosses herself and stands.)*

Motif Identification: \_\_\_\_\_

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Evidence (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 10

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #4

CAVARADOSSI: (*tenderly*) Mia gelosa!

TOSCA: Sì, lo sento... ti tormento senza posa.

CAVARADOSSI: Mia gelosa!

TOSCA: Certa sono del perdono  
se tu guardi al mio dolor!

CAVARADOSSI: Mia Tosca idolatrata,  
ogni cosa in te mi piace;  
l'ira audace  
e lo spasimo d'amor!

TOSCA: Dilla ancora  
la parola che consola...  
dilla ancora!

CAVARADOSSI: Mia vita, amante inquieta,  
dirò sempre: "Floria, t'amo!"  
Ah! l'alma acquieta,  
sempre "t'amo!" ti dirò!

My jealous darling!

Yes, I feel it... I'm constantly tormenting you

My jealous darling!

I'm sure that you would forgive me  
if only you could understand my pain

Tosca, my goddess,  
I love everything about you:  
your raging anger  
and your passionate love!

Say it again,  
those three little words...  
Say it again.

My life, my restless love,  
I will always say to you, Floria, "I love you!"  
Oh my restless love,  
I'll always tell you, "I love you!" I'll always say it.

Motif Identification:

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### TRACK 11

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #5

*(News has just arrived of Napoleon's defeat, and there is great rejoicing in the church.)*

ALL: Viva il re!... Si festeggi la vittoria!

*(As the shouts and laughter reach a peak, a cruel voice cuts through the clamor. It is Scarpia; behind him stand his agent Spoletta and a number of police officers.)*

SCARPIA: (*with great authority*) Un tal baccano in chiesa!  
Bel rispetto!

Long live the King! Let us celebrate this victory!

Such a commotion in church!  
A fine way to show respect!

Motif Identification:

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## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Evidence (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 12

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #6

Scarpia has just convinced Tosca that her beloved Cavaradossi is involved with another woman. She flies into a rage then begins to weep. Now she rushes from the church, intent on confronting Cavaradossi. Scarpia accompanies her to the exit, pretending to feel sorry for her.

Motif Identification: \_\_\_\_\_

### TRACK 13

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #7

*(As Scarpia writes the transit papers, Tosca approaches the dinner table and, with a trembling hand, takes Scarpia's wine glass. When she raises the glass to her lips, she sees on the table a sharp knife; she glances at Scarpia, who is focused on his writing, and very carefully reaches toward the knife, responding to Scarpia's questions as she does so.)*

SCARPIA: E qual via scegliete?

Which road will you take?

TOSCA: La più breve!

The shortest!

SCARPIA: Civitavecchia?

To Civitavecchia?

TOSCA: Sì.

Yes.

*(Tosca finally has the knife in her hand, and she hides it behind her as she leans against the table. She never takes her eyes off Scarpia. He places the seal on the letter and then turns toward Tosca, opening his arms to embrace her.)*

SCARPIA: Tosca, finalmente mia!

Tosca, you are finally mine!

*(His statement of victory suddenly changes into a terrible scream—Tosca has plunged the knife into his chest.)*

SCARPIA: Maledetta!

Damn you!

TOSCA: Questo è il bacio di Tosca!

This is Tosca's kiss!

Motif Identification: \_\_\_\_\_

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Evidence (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 14

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #8

SCARPIA: *(with a choked voice)* Aiuto! Muoio! *(He sways on his feet and tries to grab Tosca, but she steps back, horrified.)* Soccorso! Muoio!

TOSCA: Ti soffoca il sangue? E ucciso da una donna! M'hai assai torturata!... Odi tu ancora? Parla! Guardami! Son Tosca, o Scarpia!

SCARPIA: *(Choking on blood, he makes one final effort to rise.)* Soccorso, aiuto! Muoio! *(He falls back, dead.)*

TOSCA: *(leaning over Scarpia)* Muori dannato! Muori, Muori!

Help! I'm dying!  
Help me!  
I'm dying!

Are you choking on your own blood? Killed by a woman!  
You tortured me so much! Can you still hear me? Speak!  
Look at me! I am Tosca, Scarpia!

Help! Help! I'm dying!

Die, you devil! Die! Die!

Motif Identification:

### TRACK 15

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #9

TOSCA: È morto! Or gli perdono!

*(Without taking her eyes off the dead body, Tosca goes to the table, takes a bottle of water, and, wetting the tablecloth, uses it to wipe off her fingers. She gazes into the mirror and fixes her hair. She looks around for the transit papers, but they are not on Scarpia's desk—then she sees them, clasped in Scarpia's dead hand. She takes the papers, and watches as his arm falls, limp and lifeless, back onto the floor.)*

TOSCA: E avanti a lui tremava tutta Roma!

He's dead! Now I forgive him!

All of Rome cowered before him!

Motif Identification:

## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Evidence (CONTINUED)

### TRACK 16

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #10

Cavaradossi has bribed the jailer to take a letter to Tosca, and the jailer has left him alone to write. Soon, however, he breaks off writing, as memories of his beloved float to his mind.

CAVARADOSSI: E lucevan le stelle...  
e olezzava la terra...  
stridea l'uscio dell'orto...  
e un passo sfiorava la rena...  
entrava ella, fragrante,  
mi cadea fra le braccia...

The stars were shining...  
and the earth smelled sweet.  
The garden gate creaked open,  
and one single step left its print in the sand.  
In she walked, in a cloud of perfume,  
and fell into my arms.

Motif Identification:

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### TRACK 17

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #11

Cavaradossi begins to weep as he recalls his happy days with Tosca. Much to his surprise, she suddenly rushes in.

Motif Identification:

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### TRACK 18

#### Piece of Evidence: Excerpt #12

Tosca shows Cavaradossi the transit papers, and Cavaradossi expresses his surprise: "It's the first good thing Scarpia ever did," he tells Tosca. "Yes," she replies, "and the last."

TOSCA: Rullavano i tamburi...  
rideva, l'empio mostro... rideva...  
già la sua preda pronto a ghermir!  
"Sei mia!" —Sì. —Alla sua brama  
mi promisi. Lì presso  
luccicava una lama...  
ei scrisse il foglio liberator,  
venne all'orrendo amplesso...  
io quella lama già piantai nel cor.

The drums were rolling  
and that cruel monster laughed,  
ready to seize his prey!  
"You are mine!" Yes. I pledged  
I would satisfy his desire.  
A blade glistened close by.  
He wrote out the passports,  
he came over to embrace me...  
and I plunged that blade deep in his heart.

Motif Identification:

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## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Case Files

### Case File: Motif 1

Observations:

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What the motif means:

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### Case File: Motif 2

Observations:

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What the motif means:

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## TOSCA

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### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

## CSI: Tosca—Case Files (CONTINUED)

### Case File: Motif 3

Observations:

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What the motif means:

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### Case File: Motif 4

Observations:

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What the motif means:

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## At the Met: *A Guide to Tosca's Rome*

You are a world-famous travel writer, and you have been asked to write a guidebook for the places featured in *Tosca*. Based on what you see in the *Live in HD* production, describe the interiors of the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle (Act I), the Palazzo Farnese (Act II), and the Castel Sant'Angelo (Act III) as though you are telling a future visitor what to look at. Then point out a few important things that “happened” at that location, for instance “notice the Attavanti chapel, with a painting by the great artist Mario Cavaradossi,” or “above your heads, you’ll see the parapet from which the famous soprano Floria Tosca jumped to her death.”



Sant'Andrea della Valle (Act I)

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The Palazzo Farnese (Act II)

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The Castel Sant'Angelo (Act III)

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# Tosca: My Highs & Lows

JANUARY 27, 2018

CONDUCTED BY JAMES LEVINE

REVIEWED BY \_\_\_\_\_

THE STARS	STAR POWER	MY COMMENTS
SONYA YONCHEVA AS TOSCA	☆☆☆☆☆	
VITTORIO GRIGOLO AS CAVARADOSSI	☆☆☆☆☆	
SIR BRYN TERFEL AS SCARPIA	☆☆☆☆☆	
PATRICK CARFIZZI AS THE SACRISTAN	☆☆☆☆☆	

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
ANGELOTTI COMES TO THE CHURCH TO HIDE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CAVARADOSSI PAINTS A PORTRAIT MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CAVARADOSSI PROMISES THAT HE LOVES ONLY TOSCA MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CAVARADOSSI AGREES TO HELP ANGELOTTI MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A RELIGIOUS PROCESSION MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SCARPIA ARRIVES, HOT ON ANGELOTTI'S TRAIL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SCARPIA MAKES TOSCA FEEL JEALOUS MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SCARPIA AWAITS TOSCA'S ARRIVAL AT THE PALAZZO FARNESE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

SCARPIA ACCUSES CAVARADOSSI OF HIDING ANGELOTTI MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SCARPIA QUESTIONS TOSCA WHILE CAVARADOSSI IS TORTURED MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
THE BLOODIED CAVARADOSSI CHEERS NAPOLEON'S VICTORY MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SCARPIA MAKES A DEAL WITH TOSCA MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
TOSCA SINGS THAT SHE HAS "LIVED FOR ART AND LOVE" MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
TOSCA ACCEPTS SCARPIA'S DEAL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
"TOSCA'S KISS" MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CAVARADOSSI WAITS FOR HIS EXECUTION MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
TOSCA TELLS CAVARADOSSI ABOUT THE ESCAPE PLAN MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CAVARADOSSI'S EXECUTION, AND TOSCA'S DEATH MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5