

Chapter 27

Romantic Opera and Musical Theater to Midcentury

- [653] Most opera theatres were operated by _____, backed by _____ or _____.
Impresarios; government subsidies; private support
- (664) Figure 27.1. How good is your French? When was the premiere? Is Prevot a man or a woman? Can I use a "movie pass"? What time does it start? When and where can I get a ticket for a friend?
Today, Monday, February 29, 1836 (leap year!); a man; no, because it says so; 7 p.m.; at the box office, everyday, 11 am until 4 pm.
- Opera was a form of _____ status.
Social
- How popular was opera outside the theatre?
TQ: Published scores? When did that begin? Why?
Very; arranged in various combinations; the first part of the century; operas were popular
- What carried Italian opera? German and French opera?
Beautiful singing; the orchestra
- Singers ruled early in the century. Eventually composer received recognition in the later half.
- (655) When does a permanent repertoire begin? (Remember the 17th and 18th centuries?)
1850; Yeh, they were written, staged, then shelved. That's why my published score TQ points out a new concept that we take for granted
- There was a variety of subjects for opera in the 19th century. (Remember the 17th?) What issues spoke to the public (with their examples)?
Yeh, the 17th century was mythology and ancient Roman heroes; how to balance love with loyalty to family (Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*) or nation (Bellini's *Norma*), women's growing desire for independence (Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*), the struggle for freedom (Rossini's *William Tell* and Auber's *La muette de Portici*), and the fear of evil (Weber's *Der Freischutz*)
- List some of the examples of what defines nationalism.
Common language, shared culture, historical traditions, national institutions/rituals
- (656) What does *exoticism* mean?
Interest in foreign lands or cultures

- How many new operas were produced each year in Italy early in the 19th century. How many composers?
40; dozens
- (657) What composers dominated Italian opera to 1850?
Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini
- Make a list of Rossini operas here. Separate comic from serious.
Comic
L'Italiana in Algeri (Italian Woman in Algiers, Venice, 1813)
Il Barbiere di Siviglia (*Barber of Seville*, Rome, 1816)
Serious
[*Tancredi*, Venice, 1813]; *Otello*, Naples, 1816;
Mosè in Egitto, Naples, 1818
Guillaume Tell, Paris, 1829
[*Semiramide*, 1823; *La Cenerentola*]
- How did he achieve variety in his operas (and, thus, everlasting glory)?
Blended serious and comic in his seria and buffa operas
- (666) What is *bel canto* and its characteristics?
Beautiful singing; elegant style, effortless technique, beautiful tone, agility, flexibility, florid embellishment
- Rossini's operas are known for ___ fullness, _____ melodies, _____ rhythms, _____ phrases. The orchestra _____ the singers; he uses _____ instruments. His harmony was _____, though he liked _____ relationships. His most famous device is the _____.
Tunefulness, catchy melodies, snappy rhythms, clear phrases; supports, color; ordinary, third relationships; Rossini crescendo
- (658) SR: Rossini's father's profession? Rossini's professional experience?
Horn, trumpet, singer; viola, singer, pianist
- SR: His first opera was written in _____; by _____ he had established his international reputation; in _____ he was appointed music director of the Teatro San Carlo in Naples and he was there for ___ years.
1810; 1813; 1815; 8
- SR: What about copyright laws? What did Rossini have to do? How did he circumvent some of the difficulty of composing each opera from scratch?
There wasn't any protection and he was only paid when he participated in the performance; he had to write new operas, sometimes in haste; he reworked material
- SR: What was his approach to arias?
He wrote them for a particular singer to show off her/his talents. TQ: Would this be idiomatic writing? In one sense. Normally one thinks of idiomatic writing as being distinct, so that violins can do stuff that singers cannot do (range, no breaks for a breath, etc.).

21. SR: He married the singer _____. They eventually made it to _____, where he became the _____ of the Theatre Italien. During the last 40 years of his life, he wrote _____.
Isabella Colbran; Paris; director, nothing
22. SR: Then a paragraph of disturbing news! In the last decade he produced witty pieces (parodies) that influenced what later composers?
Saint-Saëns, Satie, Les six
23. SR: List his works (no operas, but how many?).
39; Stabat Mater, Petite messe solennelle, other sacred vocal works; Soirées musicales and Pêchés de vieillesse (Sins of Old Age)
24. TQ: After reading the paragraph on "Scene structure," what impression do you have?
It sounds like the "dry recitative dialogue and dramatically static arias" are now accompanied by orchestra with ensembles, choruses
25. (659) Now describe the scene given the example.
Instrumental introduction, recitative (scena), [tempo d'attacco (duet prior to cantabile)], cantabile (slow, lyrical section), [tempo di mezzo (interruption)], cabaletta (lively, brilliant section)
26. And the finale?
An action piece that brings together characters with various sections (shifts in tempo, meter, and key); the last section is a fast stretta
27. (660) SR: What is the meaning of "diva"? Know Henriette Sontag and Jenny Lind. Who is featured in the SR? What do you think about Example 27.1?
Goddess; Maria Malibran; in some places it doesn't look like the original yet Rossini wrote the ornamentation
28. The Barber story?
Barber, schemer; count Lindoro, (a poor soldier), Dr. Bartolo (guardian of wealthy Rosina and hopeful husband of her)
29. (663) What type of opera is Rossini famous for?
Comic
30. How many performances of William Tell? Story by?
500 in Paris during his lifetime; Friedrich von Schiller (1804)
31. What is it of Rossini's that has made it to the concert hall? How many parts? [Two are mentioned.] TQ: What's the first called? (664) Second?
Opera overtures; two (long, slow introduction with sonata form without development), four (William Tell: slow pastoral introduction; storm; slow section [ranz de vaches, a Swiss cowherd's call]; fast allegro). TQ: sonatina; potpourri
32. (664) Bellini's librettist? How many? Opera types? Name the operas.
Felice Romani; 10 serious; La Sonnambula (Sleepwalker, 1831), Norma, 1831, I Puritani (Puritans, 1835)
33. TQ: The three Italian opera composers: Who is first quarter, who is second?
Rossini, first; Bellini and Donizetti, second
34. What is he best known for?
Long, sweeping, highly embellished, intensely emotional melodies
35. "Casta diva" has the same structure as Rossini's illustrated aria.
36. (665) What is Donizetti's output?
Oratorios, cantatas, chamber music, church music, 100 songs, several symphonies, 70 operas
37. Name his operas.
Serious: Anna Bolena (Milan, 1830); Lucia de Lammermoor (Naples, 1835); opera comique La Fille du regiment (Daughter of the Regiment; Paris, 1840); Buffo: L'elisir d'amore (Elixir of Love; Milan, 1832), Don Pasquale (Paris, 1843)
38. What are some of his tricks?
Mix sentimentality with comedy in comic operas; avoid cadence to move the drama forward; beginning/endings of aria sets are disguised by choral or recitative episodes to give seamless continuity
39. Lucia story?
Scotland; Lucia; her brother tells her Edgardo has been unfaithful; she marries another but then kills him.
40. What are other Donizetti tricks?
Mad scene; reminiscence motive
41. (666) What Italian operas became part of the repertoire?
Barber of Seville, Norma, Lucia di Lammermoor
42. For France, opera was centered in _____ and shaped by _____.
Paris; politics
43. What three opera theatres did Napoleon allow? What did the other theatres do?
Opéra (tragedy); opera comique (spoken dialogue, sometimes serious); Théâtre Italien (operas in Italian); plays, comedies, vaudevilles (comedies with songs), pantomimes (scenes acted silently), ballets. There were other cities that had theaters and opera houses
44. (667) Gas lighting was introduced in _____. Who purchased the Opéra theater?
1822; businessman Louis Véron

45. What kind of opera came into being when royal patronage faded for Opéra? What is it?
Grand opera; spectacle, ballet, machinery, choruses, crowd scenes, put down the aristocrats
46. (668) Two examples? ~~Theme?~~
William Tell; Auber's *La muette de Portici* (Mute Woman of Portici, 1828); ~~rebellion against foreign repression~~
47. Who were the other leaders besides Véron?
Librettist Eugène Scribe; composer Giacomo Meyerbeer
48. What are the names of Meyerbeer's operas?
Robert le diable (1831), *Les Huguenots* (1836)
49. How many acts in grand opera?
5
50. What is *Les Huguenots* about?
St. Valentine's Day Massacre (Catholic and Protestant [Huguenot] conflict). Queen Marguerite de Valois tries to get Valentine (Catholic) to marry Raoul (Protestant). Marcel (Protestant) is angry. Raoul won't marry.
51. How is the closing scene of Act II structured?
Like an Italian opera finale (orchestral introduction, opening section, slow movement [like a cantabile], dialogue in accompanied recitative, and fast stretta)
52. (669) Who are the other composers and their works?
Halévy, *La Juive* (Jewess, 1835); Donizetti, *La Favorite* (1840); Verdi's *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* (1855); Don Carlos (1867); Wagner, *Rienzi* (1842)
53. What was Berlioz's opera? Who was his librettist?
Les Troyens (1856-58); himself
54. (670) What were the two types of opera comique?
Romantic and comic
55. What are the features of romantic ballet? Who is the dancer?
Ballerina most important; light, graceful; shorter skirts; on pointe; Marie Taglioni
56. What was the procedure for composers of ballet? Name the example.
Music written after the dance had been choreographed, so they had to fit timing, rhythms, movements, and mood;
Adam, *Giselle* (1841)
57. What is "the" German romantic opera?
Weber's *Der Freischütz*
58. (671) What was so daring?
Orchestration, harmonies, ordinary people
59. Extract the characteristics of German Romantic opera.
medieval history, legend, or fairy tale
supernatural beings/happenings
nature, country life
triumph of good (salvation, redemption, deliverance from sin/error through suffering, conversion, revelation)
60. In contrast to the Italian stress on melody, what does Weber do?
Chromatic harmony, orchestration, inner voice
61. What is the story about?
Max (ranger) loves Agathe, but must pass marksmanship contest. Caspar, who sold his soul to the devil, makes the magic bullets. Samiel is the devil. Max wastes three bullets and the fourth is controlled by Samiel, who aims it at Agathe, but she is protected by an old hermit's magical wreath, and Caspar is killed instead.
62. The Wolf's Glen Scene has _____, which began about _____. What is it?
Melodrama, 1770; spoken dialogue with background music
63. (672) The entire scene is built on a _____ chord: _____.
Diminished seventh chord; Eb-F#-A-C
64. What practice in *Der Freischütz* were important for Wagner?
Weber associated motives and keys with characters or events
65. (673) What are Weber's other operas?
Euryanthe (1823), troubadour in medieval France; *Oberon* (1826)
66. Russia had opera in _____. A permanent opera company in _____. A Russian opera with spoken dialogue in _____. But most singers and composers were _____.
1731; 1736; 1755; Italian
67. Who is the father of Russian opera? What are the Russian features?
Mikhail Glinka, *A Life for the Tsar* (1836); melodies have a Russian character, modal scales, quotation or paraphrasing of folk songs, folklike idiom
68. Next? Poet? Features?
Ruslan and Lyudmila (1842), Aleksander Pushkin; whole-tone scale, chromaticism, dissonance, variation technique applied to folk songs
69. (674) Opera composition was found in what countries? Performance in what countries?
Italy, Paris, Germany, St. Petersburg.
London, Spain, eastern Europe, Americas
70. What was the one successful English-language opera?
Michael Balfe, *The Bohemian Girl* (1843)

71. Most common in America were _____, _____ and _____.
Plays, ballad operas, English versions of foreign-language operas
72. If foreign-language operas were performed, how were they modified? To whom were they presented?
Performed in English, spoken dialogue instead of recitative, simplified ensembles and arias; to everyone before the split between high and low (popular) culture
73. How did New Orleans contribute to opera?
Théâtre d'Orléans, 1819-1866, performed French and Italian operas in their original languages
74. What other cities figured prominently?
New York (1825, Academy of Music, 1854-86), San Francisco, 1850s
75. (675) Most of America heard _____ of foreign opera.
Parts (overtures, arias, and other excerpts)
76. Who was the Swedish nightingale?
Jenny Lind (1850-52)
77. How would Mrs. Normer and Fired Shots be classified?
Parodies
78. Thus, operatic music was widespread as _____.
Popular entertainment
79. Who were the two Americans who tried to produce opera, what were the titles, and who did they imitate?
William Henry Fry, Leonora (1845), Bellini; George Frederick Bristow, Rip van Winkle (1855), Mendelssohn
80. What was the most popular form of musical theater? What is it? When? [Understand that first paragraph.]
Minstrelsy; white performers blackened their faces to impersonate African Americans in jokes, skits, songs, and dances; 1830-70
81. Who played Jim Crow? Zip Coon? Social status?
Daddy Rice; George Washington Dixon; naïve plantation slave; boastful black urban dandy
82. (676) What is an Ethiopian opera?
Comedy with songs, performed between or after the acts of a play
83. What's the first group? Year? The modern group?
Virginia Minstrels, New York, 1843; The Black and White Minstrel Show (1958-78 on British TV); ~~The New Christy Minstrels, 1970s~~
84. Who was Dan Emmitt? Song?
Virginia Minstrels violinist, Dixie (1860)
85. What are Stephen Foster's songs? Character?
Oh! Susanna (1848); Camptown Races (1850); Old Folks at Home (1851); My Old Kentucky Home (1853); first two are fast; the last two are slow, sentimental plantation songs
86. Know the banjo and call-and-response.
87. (677) What should I know from "Opera as High Culture" for an essay question?
Musical theatre for a wide range of audience
By 1850 there is a repertoire; after that new works get fewer performances as repertoire
Opera is for the elite, but it is sometimes popular culture (cartoons, for example)
Lighter forms (vaudevilles, pantomimes, musical comedies, minstrel shows) have been forgotten but we still have variety shows, cabarets, musicals, etc.
Opera is expensive (government support [Europe] and private donors [such as the Harringtons])
All classes of society attend opera, but many know opera through recordings and radio broadcasts [Texaco]
Most of the opera today is 19th-century opera