

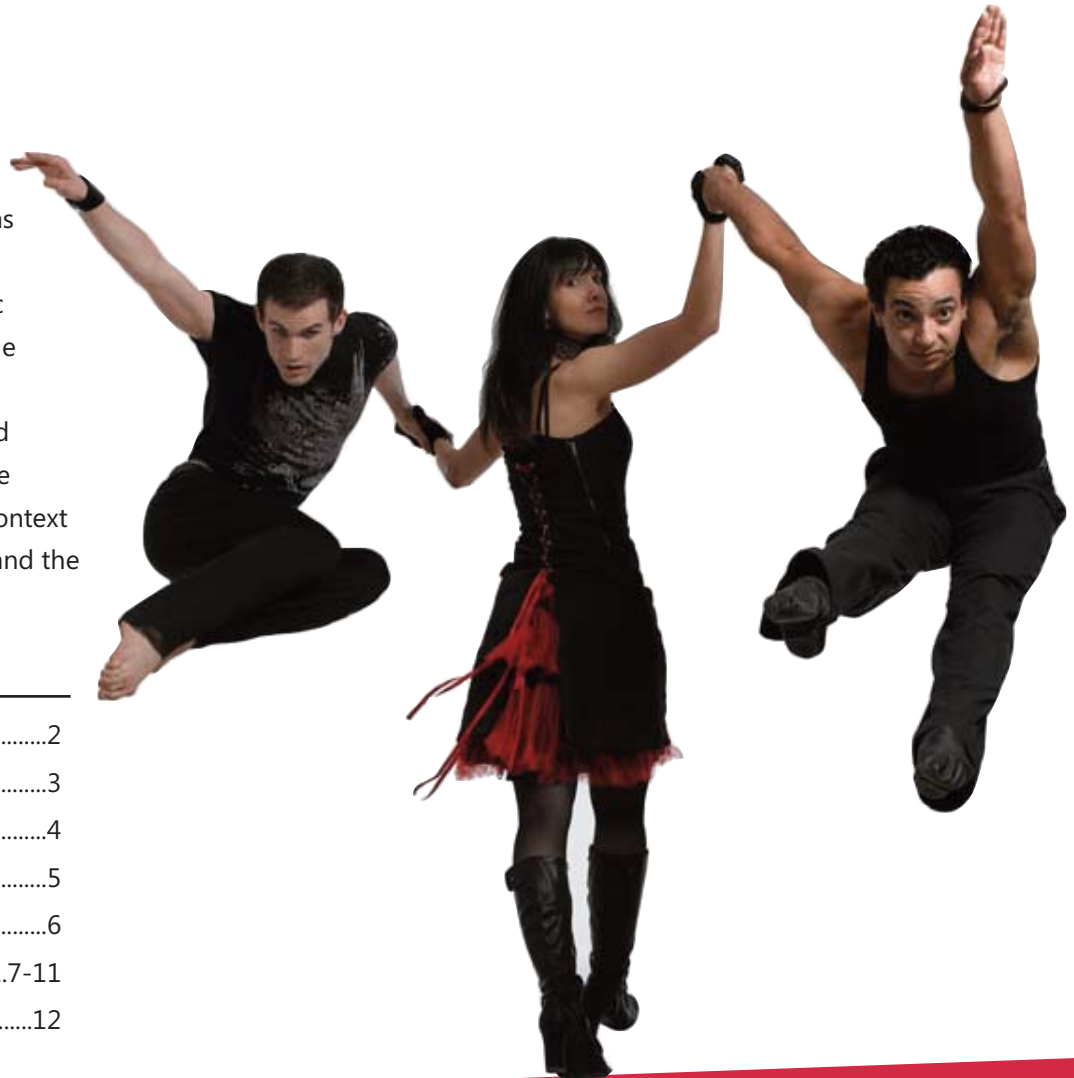
**PARSONS DANCE AND  
EAST VILLAGE OPERA COMPANY**



**REMEMBER ME**

Welcome to the State Theatre’s performance of *Remember Me*, a collaboration between Parsons Dance and the lead vocalists of East Village Opera Company. Described as a “rock dance opera,” the show uses 21st-century arrangements of classic opera tunes as the soundtrack for the story of a dangerous love triangle.

To enhance your appreciation and enjoyment of the performance, these *Keynotes* provide background and context on the performers, the production, and the art forms.



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Lian Farrer, *Vice President for Education*

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*The State Theatre, a premier nonprofit venue for the performing arts and entertainment.*

## CAUGHT

1982

Choreography by David Parsons  
Lighting Concept and Design by David Parsons  
Music by Robert Fripp  
Costume by Judy Wirkula

## REMEMBER ME

Parsons Dance, in collaboration with the lead vocalists and music of East Village Opera Company  
2009

Produced by David Parsons, David Harrison and Brick Wall Management  
Directed and Choreographed by David Parsons  
Production Design by Jason Thompson  
Lighting Design by Howell Binkley  
Musical Arrangement by East Village Opera Company  
Sound Design by Will Reid  
Costume Designer by Austin Scarlett

Overture to <i>Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)</i> .....	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
"La Danza" from <i>Soirées Musicales</i> .....	Gioacchino Antonio Rossini
"Maria, Mari" (Folk song) .....	Vincenzo Russo and Eduardo Di Capua
"Habanera" from <i>Carmen</i> .....	Georges Bizet
"Che gelida manina" from <i>La bohème</i> .....	Giacomo Puccini
Flower Duet from <i>Lakmé</i> .....	Léo Delibes
"La donna é mobile" from <i>Rigoletto</i> .....	Giuseppe Verdi
"Ave Maria" (sacred) .....	Franz Schubert
"O mio babbino caro" from <i>Gianni Schicchi</i> .....	Giacomo Puccini
"Nessun dorma" from <i>Turandot</i> .....	Giacomo Puccini
"Ebben? Ne andró lontana" from <i>La Wally</i> .....	Alfredo Catalani
"When I Am Laid in Earth" from <i>Dido and Aeneas</i> .....	Henry Purcell
"The Butterfly Duet" (Love Duet) from <i>Madama Butterfly</i> .....	Giacomo Puccini

# CAUGHT

The program opens with the company's signature work, *Caught*. This solo piece has been performed hundreds of times for more than 28 years, and is included in just about every David Parsons Dance performance. It is set to Robert Fripp's eerie score of phased electric guitars.

*Caught* plays with optical illusion through the precise coordination of lighting and movement. This demanding piece requires the soloist to perform more than 100 leaps in less than six minutes. It begins with the dancer standing in darkness. Moving from spotlight to spotlight, he becomes visible, performs a variety of movements, then disappears again into the darkness. A moment later, he reappears in a different spot and executes more moves. Then, with no strings or wires, the dancer flies. In a series of strobe-lit 'snapshots' that flash very rapidly, he appears to levitate across the stage without touching down. The illusion is created by the dancer, whose brief airborne moments are 'caught' in the momentary flash of light. As he travels across the stage performing leaps, tilts, and splits, he holds a control that allows him to time the strobe light to illuminate him only while he is in midair.



photo: Gene Schiavone

*Caught*, pictured above with dancer Miguel Quinones, was originally choreographed and performed by David Parsons himself. His performance is captured on video at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfVXRn6dNJ0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfVXRn6dNJ0)



## DAVID PARSONS ON CAUGHT

From an interview on PBS' *EGG - The Arts Show*

I think I have always been fascinated with air time—the feeling of freedom. I mean, man has always tried to get off the planet, and the feeling when you're floating in the air, that moment when your hair just gets to that point—I always try to

capture that in dance, and in using trampolines in theater. It's always a very exciting moment for me. I think we got this thing where everybody on the planet has dreamt of flying; I'm still looking for someone who hasn't. And it's an incredible thing to stumble upon as an artist—that question.

I think as an artist you're constantly looking for things to inspire you, and one of the things that I picked was photography and light, how light captures images. (I took photography in high school.) So, photography has definitely

inspired and changed the way I choreograph.

The idea of *Caught* came from working with photographers. You would go up and you would hit a shape, and then you would change it slightly. And you got so good at just knowing where that shape was from an outside eye and I thought, "Well, what if I could control that light and make a dance just in the air, but you could only see it when the strobe went off?" And that's how *Caught* was born; I started experimenting with a dark room, with a strobe light.

I performed *Caught* for nine years as a solo, but only I did it. Then I started to teach other dancers the piece and now many people do it: men and women. One of my most wonderful experiences in dance was working with Mikhail Baryshnikov. He saw *Caught*, and we worked on it together in a studio at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and it was just a wonderful afternoon watching him leap around. It was like watching hundreds of photographs of this great dancer live.

## REMEMBER ME, BUT, AH, FORGET MY FATE!

—from *Dido and Aeneas*, by Henry Purcell

*Remember Me* is a modern retelling of a classic story of a tragic love triangle. The storyline is woven around a selection of well-known opera arias and tells a shadowy tale of jealousy and rivalry. With contemporary dance, live and recorded music, video projections, complex digital lighting and visual effects, this piece is the most ambitious production created by Parsons Dance in its 22-year history.

Choreographed and directed for the stage by David Parsons, *Remember Me* is a high-energy mix of contemporary American dance, opera, and rock music. It combines the athleticism of Parsons Dance with the exhilarating live vocal performances of East Village Opera Company (EVOG). David Parsons and EVOG lead vocalists Tyley Ross and AnnMarie Milazzo created a storyline that connects EVOG's signature opera arias with David Parsons' original choreography.

Riffing on the concept of the "jukebox musical" (such as Twyla Tharp's *Movin' Out*, which was set to the music of Billy

Joel), Tyley Ross describes *Remember Me* as "a kind of jukebox opera."

David Parsons remarked, "To take Rossini, Mozart, Bizet, Puccini, Verdi and put them into a contemporary evening with a storyline is something that's different, is something that's risky, and you feel it, you feel that we're taking that risk, and it has paid off."

Parsons said he creates a different dance vocabulary for each of his pieces. "We really do try and have an incredible variety of language, and that language is dance, and that means movement. So we dig down deep, and [with *Remember Me*] we came up with something that was very grounded, very physical—with some interesting arms and lines we haven't done before."

Costumes for *Remember Me* are by New York City-based fashion designer Austin Scarlett, who competed in the first season of *Project Runway*.



## PARSONS DANCE

Parsons Dance is an internationally-renowned contemporary dance company under the artistic direction of dancer/choreographer David Parsons. Parsons Dance is committed to creating and performing American dance works of extraordinary artistry that are engaging and uplifting to audiences throughout the world. The company tours nationally and internationally, including an annual season in its home community of New York City. The company includes 11 full-time dancers and maintains a repertory of more than 70 works choreographed by David Parsons. Since 1985, Parsons Dance has toured an average of 32 weeks per year, to a total of more than 250 cities, 35 countries, six continents and millions of audience members. Many more have seen Parsons Dance on PBS, Bravo, A&E Network, and the Discovery Channel. In addition to choreography and performance, Parsons Dance is committed to audience development and arts education for participants of all ages and all levels of artistic experience. In partnership with Marymount Manhattan College, Parsons Dance offers an annual, accredited "Summer Intensive" study program for professional and pre-professional (student) dancers that attracts students from across the United States and several foreign countries.



## EAST VILLAGE OPERA COMPANY

East Village Opera Company (EVOC) was formed in New York City's East Village in 2004 by Canadians Peter Kiesewalter and Tyley Ross. Featuring a virtuosic rock band and string section, the group dedicates itself to re-imagining the greatest opera arias through the use of modern instruments and creative arrangements, balancing tradition with renewal. EVOC has recorded three CDs: *La Donna* (2004), *The East Village Opera Company* (2005), and *Olde School* (2008). *Olde School* was nominated for a Grammy in the Classical Crossover Album category. The band has performed at the Sundance Film Festival, the nationally-televised Miss USA pageant, and the world premiere of *The Da Vinci Code* in Hong Kong. Their PBS Special, *EVOC Live*, received a 2006 Emmy Award.



Tyley Ross

**AnnMarie Milazzo** is an arranger, composer, and lyricist who has done the vocal arrangements for *Spring Awakening*, *Next To Normal*, *Bright Lights*, *Big City*, and the feature film, *The Marc Pease Experience*. Her most recent work includes a new musical, *Pretty Dead Girl*, which premiered at The Sundance Film Festival, and the musical *Sea Change*. AnnMarie is the lyricist for Franco Dragone's *Carmen*, and is currently writing lyrics for Cirque du Soleil's *Le Rêve*. As a singer, she has worked with artists such as Angelique Kidjo, Carlos Santana, and Jonatha Brooke.



AnnMarie Milazzo

**Tyley Ross**, a native of Ottawa, Canada, has been a street busker, a cartoon and voice artist, acted for the small and large screen, written and recorded two solo albums, and performed as a guest soloist with orchestras across Canada and the US. After being discovered by Pete Townshend of The Who in 1994, Tyley was cast in the title role of the Canadian premiere of *The Who's Tommy*. He spent the next ten years on musical stages across North America, in lead roles at the Shaw and Stratford Festivals, and on Broadway. In 2001, Tyley was introduced to Peter Kiesewalter; their experiments with recording opera arias in a variety of modern contexts led to the unveiling of the East Village Opera Company in 2004. Tyley received his master's degree in voice studies from London's Central School of Speech and Drama.



## **Mozart: Overture to *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786)**

Before Mozart, opera was seen as an exclusively upper-class art form, reflected not only in its audiences but also in the characters on stage. Things changed with *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*), the story of a servant who stands up to his master and eventually outwits him. The opera was dangerously subversive for its time in the years leading up to the French Revolution, presaging the spirit of rock and roll by almost 200 years—in particular, the Who’s “Won’t Get Fooled Again,” with its call for revolution and change.

## **Rossini: “La danza” from *Les soirées musicales* (1835) Words by Carlo Pepoli**

The tarantella, of which this song is an example, is a lively Neapolitan folk dance. The name is derived from ‘tarantola’ (tarantula), a poisonous spider common to the region. Tradition had it that victims of a tarantula bite could avoid death by frenzied dancing—a sort of “musical exorcism.” While there’s no record of Rossini’s tarantella having effected any miracle cures, this lightning-fast song has become a concert favorite.

The moon is already over the ocean;  
Mamma mia, we'll jump about!  
It's a beautiful time for dancing,  
Anyone who's in love won't miss it.

Quickly ladies, come here  
And dance round and round,  
A handsome, cheerful lad  
Will have a turn with every girl.  
As long as a star twinkles in the sky  
And the moon shines

The handsomest boy and prettiest girl  
Will dance all night.

Faster, faster, faster,  
Faster, faster, faster,  
Mamma mia, we'll jump about!

Leap and leap, go round and round,  
Every couple swirls about,  
Now they advance, now they retreat,  
and returns to the assault.

Holding closely, closely the blonde, then the  
brunette, go here and there;  
Then go with the redhead, with the pale one  
take a break.  
Long live the ball, round and round, I am a  
King, I am a Pasha  
It is the greatest delight in the world, the  
dearest pleasure!

**Di Capua: “Maria, Mari”**  
**Lyrics by Vincenzo Russo**

Eduardo Di Capua will live on forever as the composer of “O, sole mio,” which has been sung by everyone from Caruso and Pavarotti to Bryan Adams and Elvis Presley (“It’s Now or Never”). Di Capua’s second-most famous song is “Maria, Mari” (which, to the best of our knowledge, was never recorded by Elvis.) It’s a typical Neapolitan serenade of the ‘come-to-the-window’ genre.

Open, window!	in order to be around here all the time,
Let me see Marie’s face,	hoping to talk to her!
For I’m down in the street,	Oh, Marie, oh, Marie,
Hoping to see her.	How much sleep I’m losing over you!
I have no peace, not even for an hour:	Let me sleep,
I make the night come day,	holding you in my arms awhile!

**Bizet: “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle” (Habanera) from *Carmen* (1875)**  
**Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy**

While the “Habanera,” in our opinion, doesn’t really sound like a traditional Spanish folk song, Bizet was successful in establishing the character of Carmen in this aria: that of a coquettish, flirtatious, and extremely confident seductress.

Love is a rebellious bird That no one can tame. And you call him quite in vain If it suits him to refuse. Nothing works, neither threats nor prayers, One man speaks well, the other keeps silent; And it’s the other one that I prefer— He hasn’t said a word, but I like him.	Love! Love is a bohemian child. It has never, ever recognized the law. If you love me not, then I love you, And if I love you, watch out!  The bird you thought you’d caught Flapped its wings and flew away. Love stays away, you can wait for it; When you no longer expect it, there it is!	All around you, quickly, quickly, It comes, it goes and then comes again! You think you’ve got hold of it, it escapes you, You think you’ve escaped it, it’s gotten hold of you!  If you love me not, then I love you, And if I love you, watch out!
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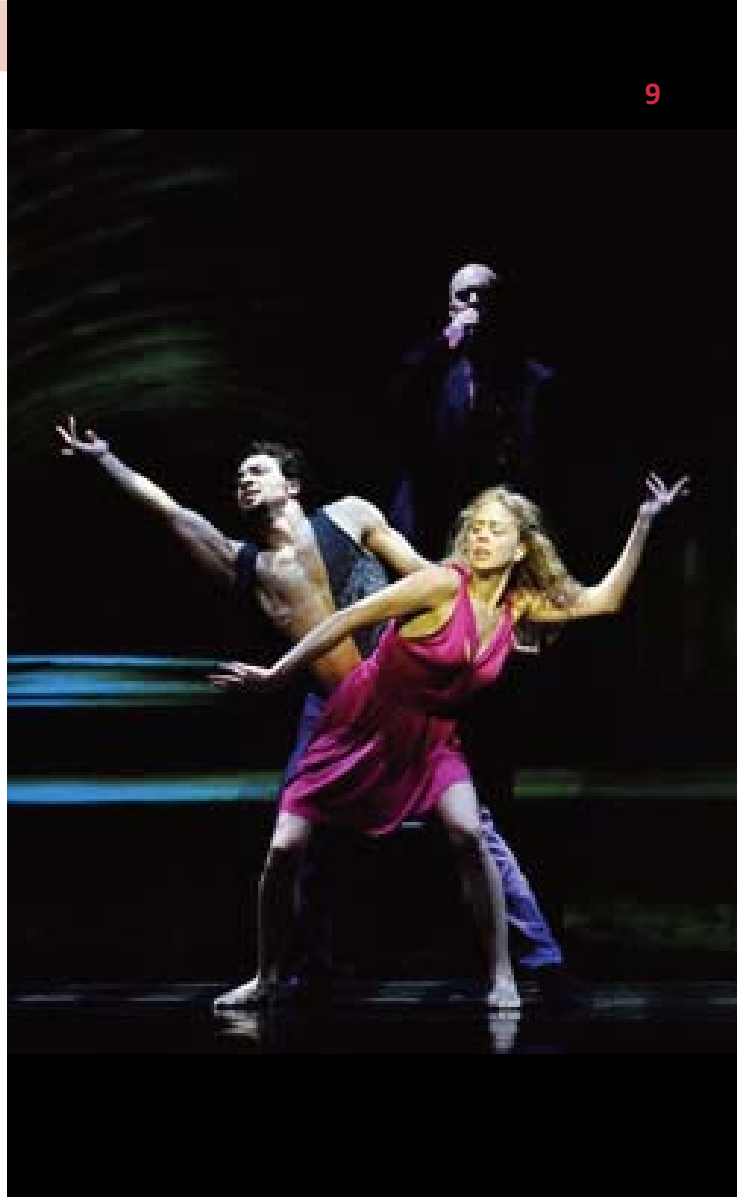
## **Puccini: "Che gelida manina" from *La bohème* (1896)**

**Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica**

*La bohème* is the story of four hipsters in the Latin Quarter of Paris, a neighborhood that shares historic similarities with the East Village in New York. In this aria a poor poet and his sickly neighbor fumble in the dark hallway looking for her lost keys. He accidentally touches her hand, and falls instantly in love. He bares his soul to her. Knowing perhaps that he's said too much, he asks, "Now that you know me, will you tell me: who are you?"

What a cold little hand,  
let me warm it for you.  
What's the use of looking?  
We won't find it in the dark.  
But luckily it's a moonlit night,  
and we have the moon near us  
here.  
Wait, miss, I will tell you in two  
words  
who I am, what I do, and how I live.  
May I?  
Who am I? I am a poet.  
What do I do? I write.  
And how do I live? I live.  
In my carefree poverty I lavishly  
spend  
rhymes and love songs like a great  
lord.

When it comes to dreams and  
visions  
and castles in the air,  
I've the soul of a millionaire.  
Now and then all the jewels are  
stolen from my safe by two  
thieves:  
a pair of pretty eyes.  
They came in with you just now,  
and my usual dreams, my lovely  
dreams,  
melted at once into thin air!  
But I pay no regard to the theft,  
for left in their place is hope!  
Now that you know all about me,  
Speak, tell me who you are.  
Please do!



## **Delibes: "Dôme épais, le jasmin" (Flower Duet) from *Lakmé* (1883)**

**Libretto by Edmond Gondinet and Philippe Gille**

An Indian girl and her female slave slip off to the water's edge while singing about birds, lotuses, and the river's current... renowned in the opera world for its Sapphic subtext. Immortalized in our time as the soundtrack for British Airways and countless other TV commercials.

LAKME:  
Under the dome where the jasmine  
Thickly entwines with the rose,  
Riverbanks in bloom, in the cool morning,  
They call to us.  
Ah! Let us float along,  
Following the fleeting current:  
On the rippling waves,  
With an unhurried hand  
Let us reach the bank  
Where the bird sings.  
Under the dome, the white jasmine,  
They call to us!

MALLIKA:  
Under the dome where the white jasmine  
Thickly entwines with the rose,  
On the flowery riverbank,  
Laughing at the morning,  
Come, let us go down together  
Let us gently float  
On its charming waves,  
Let us follow the fleeting current  
On the rippling waves.  
With an unhurried hand  
Come, let us reach the bank  
Where the spring sleeps  
And the bird sings

Under the dome, under the white jasmine;  
Ah, let us go down together!

LAKME:  
I don't know what sudden fear  
Takes hold of me  
When my father goes alone to their  
accursed city,  
I tremble, I tremble with fear.

MALLIKA:  
May Ganesha protect him  
Up to the pond where happily frolic  
The swans with wings of snow,  
Come, let us gather the blue lotus.

## **Verdi: “La donna è mobile” from *Rigoletto* (1851)**

### **Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave**

It wasn't this opera's degrading representation of women that angered the elite, nor was it the boozing and whoring. What really pissed off the European royal courts was the portrayal of a boozing and whoring king. The opera was based on a play by Victor Hugo titled *Le roi s'amuse* (*The King Amuses Himself*) and set in the French court of Francois I. Hugo's play was judged libellous and banned from performance for 50 years. When Verdi took up the story, he was forced by the censors to change the title and center the story around a fictitious Duke of Mantua before it was finally deemed suitable by the heavy-handed censors. This aria gives an accurate indication of the Duke's character.

Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind  
Changeable in both word and thought.  
Always a sweet, pretty face;  
Whether weeping or laughing, she is lying.  
Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind  
Changeable in both word and thought.  
Any man who trusts her is always miserable;  
The man who confides in her—reckless is his heart!  
Yet no man feels completely happy  
Unless he drinks of love on that bosom!

## **Puccini: “O mio babbino caro” from *Gianni Schicchi* (1918)**

### **Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano**

The singer begs for her father's permission to pursue a love interest. That seems to be somewhat of an archaic dilemma in this day and age, so we added the point of view of the coy but frustrated lover. Our homage to the great Marvin Gaye is not restricted to the bridge—knowing Marvin's tragic fate at the hands of his father is one of the reasons we took a slightly more sinister harmonic approach.

Oh my dear Daddy,  
I like her, she is so beautiful  
I want to go to Porta Rossa  
To buy the ring.  
Yes, yes, I want to go there!  
And if I love her in vain  
I'd go to the Ponte Vecchio [a famous bridge in Florence]  
To throw myself into the Arno,  
I pine and I suffer!  
Oh God, I wish I were dead!  
Daddy, have pity!

## **Schubert: “Ave Maria” (1825)**

Schubert didn't write this “Ave Maria.” What he *did* write was a song set to a German translation of part of Sir Walter Scott's poem *The Lady of the Lake*. The poem is indeed a prayer to the Virgin Mary, which gave someone the bright idea of ‘borrowing’ Schubert's melody and replacing the words with the full text of the Roman Catholic prayer.

Hail Mary, full of grace  
Hail, the Lord is with you  
Blessed are you among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners—now, and in the hour of our  
death.  
Amen.

## **Puccini: “Nessun dorma” from *Turandot* (1926)**

### **Libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni**

Have you ever watched a friend fall in love with positively the wrong person? In Puccini's final opera, the protagonist Calaf loses his mind for the nasty Princess Turandot. Having already reneged on one deal, Turandot agrees to another: if she is unable to discover Calaf's true name by morning, she will marry him. However, if she does find out, she gets to cut off his head. Most guys would run—Calaf chooses instead to sing this song. Puccini himself died before he could finish this opera.

No one sleep! No one sleep!  
You too, o Princess,  
In your cold chamber  
You watch the stars that tremble with love  
and with hope!  
But my secret is locked inside me,  
No one will know my name! No, no!  
I will place it on your mouth  
When daylight shines!  
And my kiss will end the silence  
that makes you mine!  
Disappear, o night! Set, you stars!  
Set, you stars! At dawn I will win!  
I will win! I will win!

## Catalani: "Ebben? Ne andrò lontana" from *La Wally* (1892)

Libretto by Luigi Illica

There are many, many ways one can die in an opera. Besides the usual stabbing, strangling, drowning, poison swallowing, and the ever-popular wasting away, you'll find babies thrown into the fire, a soprano who leaps into an erupting volcano, and even death by singing. In true operatic style, the heroine of Alfredo Catalani's *La Wally* throws herself into an avalanche. Fortunately for us music lovers, before we get to the fatal leap, Wally sings this gorgeous aria. In it, she determines to leave her Tyrolean village rather than be forced to marry a man she does not love.

Ah well then! I shall go far away Like the echo of the pious church- bell goes away, There somewhere in the white snow; There amongst the clouds of gold, There where hope, hope Is regret, is regret, is sorrow! O from my mother's cheerful house Wally is about to go away from you, from you!	Quite far away, and perhaps to you, And perhaps to you, will never more return, Nor ever more see you again! Never again, never again! I will go away alone and far, There, somewhere in the white snow, I shall go, I will go away alone and far And amongst the clouds of gold!
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## Puccini: Love Duet from *Madama Butterfly* (1904)

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

Long before *Miss Saigon*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* broke audiences' hearts with the tragic tale of a Japanese girl who put all her love and faith in the hands of a callous American officer. The gorgeous, sensuous love duet comes at the end of the first act, right after Cio-Cio San (a.k.a. Butterfly) has married lieutenant Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton.

### CIO-CIO SAN

Love me with a tiny love,  
a childlike love,  
The kind that suits me.  
Love me, please.  
We are a people accustomed to small,  
humble, silent things,  
To a tenderness that lightly caresses,  
and yet is as vast as the heavens and the  
waves of the sea.

### PINKERTON

Let me kiss your dear hands.

My Butterfly! How aptly they named you,  
fragile butterfly...

### CIO-CIO SAN

They say that beyond the sea  
If a butterfly falls into the hands of a man,

It is pierced with a pin  
And fixed to a table!

### PINKERTON

There's some truth in that.  
And do you know why?  
So that it won't fly away.  
I've caught you...  
I press you to me, quivering.  
You're mine!

### CIO-CIO SAN

Yes, for life!

### PINKERTON

Come, come!  
Cast all sad fears out of your heart!  
The night is peaceful. Look, everything is  
asleep.  
You're mine, Ah, come!

## Purcell: "When I Am Laid in Earth" from *Dido and Aeneas* (1689)

Libretto by Nahum Tate

According to Virgil's *Aeneid*, Queen Dido of Carthage and Trojan War hero Aeneas fell madly in love. Aeneas is commanded by the gods to leave Carthage and sail to Italy, where he is destined to become the founder of Rome. Heartbroken that her lover has skipped town, Dido asks to be remembered for how she lived her life and not for how she chooses to end it. Our version has an additional voice of remembrance: one that binds the ending of one life to the beginning of another.

When I am laid in earth  
May my wrongs create no trouble in thy breast  
Remember me!  
But ah! Forget my fate!

### CIO-CIO SAN

Ah! Lovely night! So many stars!  
I've never seen them so beautiful!  
Only twinkle sparkles and shines  
With the brilliance of an eye.  
Oh! So many eyes fixed and staring,  
Looking at us from all sides!  
In the sky, along the shore, out to sea...the  
heavens are smiling!  
Ah! Lovely night!  
In an ecstasy of love the sky is smiling!



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*Opera for Dummies*, by David Pogue and Scott Speck. For Dummies, 1997.

*Opera 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving Opera*, by Fred Plotkin. Hyperion.

## VIDEO

The Parsons Dance Company: *Fine Dining, Caught, Scrutiny* (1992). Arthaus Musik.

## ONLINE

Parsons Dance

[www.parsonsdance.org](http://www.parsonsdance.org)

East Village Opera Company

[www.eastvillageoperacompany.com](http://www.eastvillageoperacompany.com)

The San Diego Opera's web guide to opera, with definitions, articles, and more.

[www.operapaedia.org](http://www.operapaedia.org)

Arkiv Music has an exhaustive selection of classical CDs and DVDs

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