

# ACCESS OPERA

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AUSTIN  
OPERA

Dear Teachers,

A special welcome from Austin Opera!

We are excited to share **ACCESS OPERA** and invite you to experience a new educational product for gaining a better understanding and appreciation of these operas.

For Austin Opera's 2018-2019 season, **ACCESS OPERA** provides curriculum materials that are designed to help you and your students learn about the operas ***La bohème***, ***Otello*** and ***Silent Night*** as well as their composers and librettists.

Included in the three lessons and PowerPoints are two curated selections from the operas ***La bohème*** and ***Otello***, with a focus on musical elements highlighted in Animated Listening Maps and Classroom Activities. Selected excerpts of the opera ***Silent Night*** will also be featured.

As you explore these selections, we hope they will become favorites you will want to hear again and again.

Have a wonderful time experiencing these fabulous operas. We look forward to seeing you at the opera!

### **Austin Opera**

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# *La bohème:*

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

BY GIACOMO PUCCINI



# La bohème: "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

## About the Composer

- Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini was an Italian composer of the Romantic Period.

- Puccini was most famous for his operas, many of which are now standards for opera companies.
- Puccini's father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather (whom he was named after) were all fairly well-known musicians in Italy.

- Puccini's family was involved with music for the Cattedrale di San Marino for 140 years (1740-1880).

- Puccini loved cars and hunting.
- Puccini died from complications of a treatment for throat cancer.



## About the Music

- *La bohème* premiered on February 1, 1896 at the Teatro Regio in Turin, Italy. The performance was conducted by a young Arturo Toscanini.

- The Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa is based on Henri Murger's novel, *Scènes de la vie de bohème*, a collection of short stories portraying a group of young people living in Paris in the 1840's.

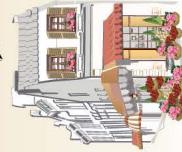
- "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)" is heard in Act 2 as the group of main characters are in a café. Musetta arrives with her wealthy and elderly boyfriend and she is tired of him. She sings this selection to her ex-boyfriend, Marcello, hoping to reclaim his affection.

## Vocabulary

- opera** a story told through music, generally sung throughout
- aria** an elaborate melody sung with accompaniment, as in an opera or oratorio
- soprano** a higher treble singing voice

## More

Puccini died in Brussels on November 29, 1924, and the news of his death reached Rome during a performance of *La bohème*. The opera was immediately stopped, and the orchestra played Chopin's *Funeral March* for the stunned audience.



## *La bohème*: "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)" de Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

### Acerca del Compositor

- Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini fue un compositor italiano del período Romántico.

- Puccini fue muy famoso por sus óperas, muchas de las cuales son ahora estándares para las compañías de ópera.

- El padre, abuelo, bisabuelo y tatarabuelo abuelo de Puccini (de los quienes heredó su nombre) eran músicos reconocidos en Italia.

- La familia de Puccini estuvo involucrada con la música de la Catedrale di San Martino por 140 años (1740-1880).

- Puccini amaba los carros y la cacería.

- Puccini murió por complicaciones de un tratamiento para el cáncer de la garganta.



Quando m'en vo soletta per la via,  
**When I walk all alone in the street**

*La Bohème:*

"Quando m'en vo" (Musetta's Waltz)

by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)



# LESSON OVERVIEW



## *La bohème:*

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

### LESSON BY DEBBIE TANNERT

#### GENERAL CONCEPTS/ VOCABULARY

Opera, Romantic Period, Audience  
Etiquette

#### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. Experience operatic music of the Romantic Period.
2. Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for venue and purpose.

### MATERIALS



Mighty Music PPT

Mighty Music PDF



Student Reproducible Pages:

Background Page in English/Spanish

*La bohème* Plot Synopsis

"Checking for Understanding"

"Boomwhackers Play" Activity Page

"Audience Etiquette" Page

**TIME:** 2:34

#### CONCEPTS/VOCABULARY

*a tempo, aria, dolce, melodic direction, morendo, opera, ritardando, soprano, triple meter*

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Identify melodic direction.
2. Perform A theme with accurate intonation and rhythm.
3. Define selected tempo markings.

#### TEKS

**HS Level 1** - 1.A, 2.A, 2.B, 3.C, 3.D, 3.E, 6.A

**MS Level 1** - 1.A, 1.B, 1.D, 2.A, 2.D, 3.C, 4.B, 4.C, 5.A

**Grade 5** - 1.A, 1.B, 1.C, 1.D, 2.A, 2.C, 3.A, 5.B, 6.A, 6.C, 6.D, 6.E

# LESSON

## *La bohème:*

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"  
by Giacomo Puccini



### SETTING THE STAGE

Introduce the concept of Romantic Period Opera.

- ◆ An *opera* is a story told through music, generally sung throughout. The Romantic Period operas are characterized by themes of individualism and self-expression. This new emphasis on emotional revelation found its voice in more expressive harmony, techniques such as leitmotif, and a closer approach to equality between vocal and instrumental elements.

Introduce the concept of *melodic direction*.

- Look at the chalkboards with dots of paint on the map. Notice how the dots of paint are higher and lower to show the *melodic direction* or path of the melody. Direct students to listen to the teacher sing or play a recording of the aria. Ask students to follow the melodic direction with their hand. Notice the descending major scale of the melody.

Tell students they will hear the aria "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)" from the opera *La bohème*.



### TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

1) Have students:

- ◆ As you view the PowerPoint, read or listen to background information on Puccini (poo-CHEE-nee) (1858-1924) and this selection. View the Composer Portrait on the PowerPoint.
- ◆ Read or listen to the ***La bohème*** Plot Synopsis.
- ◆ Define Concepts/Vocabulary for this lesson.

2) Review the listening map.

- ◆ Identify the text box at the top. Italian lyrics with English translation will display as heard.
- ◆ Notice the meter signature 3/4 on the sign post. Identify as triple meter or the beat moving in sets of 3.
- ◆ Notice the chalkboards with paint dots that will show the melodic direction as heard.

3) Listen to, Sing and/or Play the Theme found in the NOTATED THEME section of the lesson or the Activity Page. The Activity Page is in a better key for singing by students and it highlights the solfege.

4) Listen to the selection and follow the map two times. Watch the text box the first time and watch the melodic direction on the chalkboards the second time. Click on the arrow at the bottom of the Animated Listening Map slide to start the Animated Listening Map.

5) Visit <https://tinyurl.com/quandomenvo> to hear "Musetta's Waltz" with Madelyn Renee as Musetta.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/windquando> to hear a Wind Symphony version of this selection. The PPT includes links to these YouTube videos that we do not own, hosted on SafeShare, which is advertisement free.

# LESSON

## *La bohème:*

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

by Giacomo Puccini



### ASSESSMENT



Attend the performance of *La bohème* and demonstrate performance decorum (attentive listening, attire and behavior) and audience etiquette appropriate for the venue and purpose.



Complete the "Checking for Understanding" worksheet.  
ANSWERS: 1. b 2. a 3. a 4. b 5. c



Perform the "Boomwhacker Play" Activity Page to play the A Theme.

#### Vocal Technique Connection:

An important part of singing is breathing. The best breath for singing begins by inhaling a slow, low, deep breath keeping your shoulders in a "low" position and your ribcage in an "up" position. As you sing, the air should leave your lungs in a steady stream. Good breathing technique produces a good vocal tone which is the basis for any style of singing. Good vocal tone is characterized by singing with a vibrating, focused, well-projected sound with minimal tension in the face and neck.

#### SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) Connection:

Musetta's broader story is that she really loves Marcello, but keeps finding awful rich guys to date for financial security. When Rodolfo realizes how sick Mimi is, he breaks up with her, secretly hoping that she too will find a wealthy suitor that could provide her with the medicine she needs. At the end of the opera, Musetta is the one who brings Mimi home and prays over her as she dies.

People are sometimes not what they seem at first. At first glance, Musetta is a party girl who bounces from guy to guy when she gets bored, but really she's just hurt because she has to choose between love and livelihood.

Talk with students about not judging people too quickly. Wait and get to know WHY they are acting the way they are before judging their character.

# LESSON

## ***La bohème:***

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"  
by Giacomo Puccini



## VOCABULARY/DEFINITIONS

***a tempo*** return to the original tempo

**ABA form** a three-part musical form in which a main theme returns after a contrasting section

***aria*** an elaborate melody sung with accompaniment, as in an opera or oratorio

***dolce*** to play/sing in a tender, adoring manner; to play/sing sweetly with a light touch

**introduction** an opening section of a piece of music that comes before the main body of the piece

**melodic direction** the path of notes in a melody; up, down, or staying the same

***morendo*** with a gradual softening of tone and slowing of movement

***opera*** a story told through music, generally sung throughout

***ritardando*** gradually getting slower

**Romantic Period** an era of Western classical music in the 19th century. It is related to Romanticism, the European artistic and literary movement that arose in the second half of the 18th century. In the Romantic period, music became more expressive and emotional.

**soprano** a high female or treble singing voice

**triple meter** beats in groups of 3

# Synopsis

## The Story of *La bohème*



Place: Paris

Time: Around 1830

### Act 1

*In the four bohemians' garret (Christmas Eve)*

Marcello is painting while Rodolfo gazes out of the window. They complain of the cold. In order to keep warm, they burn the manuscript of Rodolfo's drama. Colline, the philosopher, enters shivering and disgruntled at not having been able to pawn some books. Schaunard, the musician of the group, arrives with food, wine and cigars. He explains the source of his riches: a job with an eccentric English gentleman, who ordered him to play his violin to a parrot until it died. The others hardly listen to his tale as they set up the table to eat and drink. Schaunard interrupts, telling them that they must save the food for the days ahead: tonight they will all celebrate his good fortune by dining at Cafe Momus, and he will pay.

The friends are interrupted by Benoît, the landlord, who arrives to collect the rent. They flatter him and ply him with wine. In his drunkenness, he begins to boast of his amorous adventures, but when he also reveals that he is married, they thrust him from the room—without the rent payment—in comic moral indignation. The rent money is divided for their evening out in the *Quartier Latin*.

Marcello, Schaunard and Colline go out, but Rodolfo remains alone for a moment in order to finish an article he is writing, promising to join his friends soon. There is a knock at the door. It is a girl who lives in another room in the building. Her candle has blown out, and she has no matches; she asks Rodolfo to light it. She is briefly overcome with faintness, and Rodolfo helps her to a chair and offers her a glass of wine. She thanks him. After a few minutes, she says that she is better and must go. But as she turns to leave, she realizes that she has lost her key.

Her candle goes out in the draught and Rodolfo's candle goes out too; the pair stumble in the dark. Rodolfo, eager to spend time with the girl, to whom he is already attracted, finds the key and pockets it, feigning innocence. He takes her cold hand and tells her of his life as a poet, then asks her to tell him more about her life. The girl says her name is Mimì, and describes her simple life as an embroiderer. Impatiently, the waiting friends call Rodolfo. He answers and turns to see Mimì bathed in moonlight. They realize that they have fallen in love. Rodolfo suggests remaining at home with Mimì, but she decides to accompany him to the Cafe Momus. As they leave, they sing of their newfound love.

### Act 2

*Quartier Latin (same evening)*

A great crowd, including children, has gathered with street sellers announcing their wares. The friends arrive; Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet from a vendor, while Colline buys a coat and Schaunard a horn. Parisians gossip with friends and bargain with the vendors; the children of the streets clamor to see the wares of Parpignol, the toy seller. The friends enter the Cafe Momus.

As the men and Mimì dine at the cafe, Musetta, formerly Marcello's sweetheart, arrives with her rich (and elderly) government minister admirer, Alcindoro, whom she is tormenting. It is clear she has tired of him. To the delight of the Parisians and the embarrassment of her patron, she sings a risqué song ("Quando me'n vo' (*Musetta's Waltz*)" - When I go along"), hoping to reclaim Marcello's attention. The ploy works; at the same time, Mimì recognizes that Musetta truly loves Marcello. To be rid of Alcindoro for a bit, Musetta pretends to be suffering from a tight shoe and sends him to the shoemaker to get her shoe mended. Alcindoro leaves, and Musetta and Marcello fall rapturously into each other's arms.

The friends are presented with their bill. Schaunard's purse has gone missing and no one else has enough money to pay. The sly Musetta has the entire bill charged to Alcindoro. The sound of a military band is heard, and the friends leave. Alcindoro returns with the repaired shoe seeking Musetta. The waiter hands him the bill and, dumbfounded, Alcindoro sinks into a chair.



## Act 3

*At the toll gate at the Barrière d'Enfer (late February)*

Peddlers pass through the barriers and enter the city. Mimì appears, coughing violently. She tries to find Marcello, who is currently living in a little tavern where he paints signs for the innkeeper. She tells him of her hard life with Rodolfo, who abandoned her the night before, and of Rodolfo's terrible jealousy. Marcello tells her that Rodolfo is asleep inside, and expresses concern about Mimi's cough. Rodolfo wakes up and comes out looking for Marcello. Mimì hides and overhears Rodolfo first telling Marcello that he left Mimi because of her coquettishness, but finally confessing that his jealousy is a sham: he fears she is slowly being consumed by a deadly illness (most likely tuberculosis, known by the catchall name "consumption" in the nineteenth century). Rodolfo, in his poverty, can do little to help Mimì and hopes that his pretended unkindness will inspire her to seek another, wealthier suitor.

Out of kindness towards Mimì, Marcello tries to silence him, but she has already heard all. Her weeping and coughing reveal her presence, and Rodolfo hurries to her. Musetta's laughter is heard and Marcello goes to find out what has happened. Mimì tells Rodolfo that she is leaving him, and asks that they separate amicably; but their love for one another is too strong for the pair to part. As a compromise, they agree to remain together until the spring, when the world is coming to life again and no one feels truly alone. Meanwhile, Marcello has found Musetta, and the couple quarrel fiercely about Musetta's flirtatiousness: an antithetical counterpoint to the other pair's reconciliation.

## Act 4

*Back in the garret (some months later)*

Marcello and Rodolfo are trying to work, though they are primarily talking about their girlfriends, who have left them and found wealthy lovers. Rodolfo has seen Musetta in a fine carriage and Marcello has seen Mimì dressed like a queen. The men both express their nostalgia. Schaunard and Colline arrive with a very frugal dinner and all parody eating a plentiful banquet, dance together and sing, before Schaunard and Colline engage in a mock duel.

Musetta suddenly appears; Mimì, who took up with a wealthy viscount after leaving Rodolfo in the spring, has left her patron. Musetta found her that day in the street, severely weakened by her illness, and Mimi begged Musetta to bring her to Rodolfo. Mimì, haggard and pale, is assisted onto a bed. Briefly, she feels as though she is recovering. Musetta and Marcello leave to sell Musetta's earrings in order to buy medicine, and Colline leaves to pawn his overcoat. Schaunard leaves with Colline to give Mimì and Rodolfo some time together. Mimi tells Rodolfo that her love for him is her whole life.

To Mimì's delight, Rodolfo presents her with the pink bonnet he bought her, which he has kept as a souvenir of their love. They remember past happiness and their first meeting—the candles, the lost key. Suddenly, Mimì is overwhelmed by a coughing fit. The others return, with a gift of a muff to warm Mimì's hands and some medicine. Mimì gently thanks Rodolfo for the muff, which she believes is a present from him, reassures him that she is better and falls asleep. Musetta prays. Schaunard discovers that Mimì has died. Rodolfo rushes to the bed, calling Mimi's name in anguish, weeping helplessly as the curtain falls.

# Boomwhackers Play Musetta's Waltz

## Activity Page

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G clef and 3/4 time. The lyrics are provided below each staff, aligned with the notes. The notes are colored according to the Boomwhacker system:

- Staff 1:** Red (Do), Green (Ti), Purple (La), Blue (So), Yellow (Fa), Green (Mi), Red (Re), Purple (Do).  
Lyrics: Quan - do m'en vo', quan - do m'en vo' so -
- Staff 2:** Red (Do), Green (Ti), Green (La), Blue (So), Purple (Fa), Blue (Mi), Yellow (Re), Black (Do).  
Lyrics: let - ta per la via la gen - te so - stae mi - ra.
- Staff 3:** Red (Do), Red (Ti), Red (La), Red (So), Purple (Fa), Purple (Mi), Red (Re), Purple (Do).  
Lyrics: e la bel - ez - za mi - a, tu - tta ri - cer - ca in
- Staff 4:** Blue (Do), Blue (Ti), Red (La), Blue (So), Yellow (Fa), Blue (Mi), Red (Re), Purple (Do).  
Lyrics: me, ri - cer - ca in me da ca - po a pie.

Do'

Ti

La

So

Fa

Mi

Re

Do

# LESSON

***La bohème:***

"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

by Giacomo Puccini



## NOTATED THEME

Theme A

**Tempo di Valzer lento** ♩ = 104

The musical score consists of four staves of music for voice and piano. The top staff shows the vocal line with lyrics. The piano accompaniment is shown in the bottom three staves, featuring a bass line and harmonic chords. Measure numbers 1, 5, 9, and 13 are indicated on the left side of the score.

Quan - do m'en vo', quan - do m'en vo' so -  
let - ta per la via la gen - te so - stae mi - ra.  
e la bel - ez - za mi - a, tu - tta ri - cer - ca in  
me, ri - cer - ca in me da ca - po a pie.

# CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING



**La bohème:**  
"Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"  
by \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

After listening to and viewing the Animated Listening Map, answer the following questions.

1) What is the form of "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"?

- a. rondo
- b. ABA
- c. theme and variation

2) Look at the following ensembles pictured here.



A.



B.



C.

Which of these ensembles accompanies this selection?

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C

3) Read the following newspaper article headlines:

- A. Puccini Composes Italian Opera
- B. Puccini Composes Humorous Opera
- C. Puccini Composes French Opera

Which article would you read to find out more about this opera?

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C

4) From which musical period is this selection?

- a. Classical
- b. Romantic
- c. 20th Century

5) What is the best definition of *aria* as heard in "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"?

- a. a suffix occurring in scientific terms of Latin origin
- b. a nymph from Classical Mythology
- c. an elaborate melody sung with accompaniment

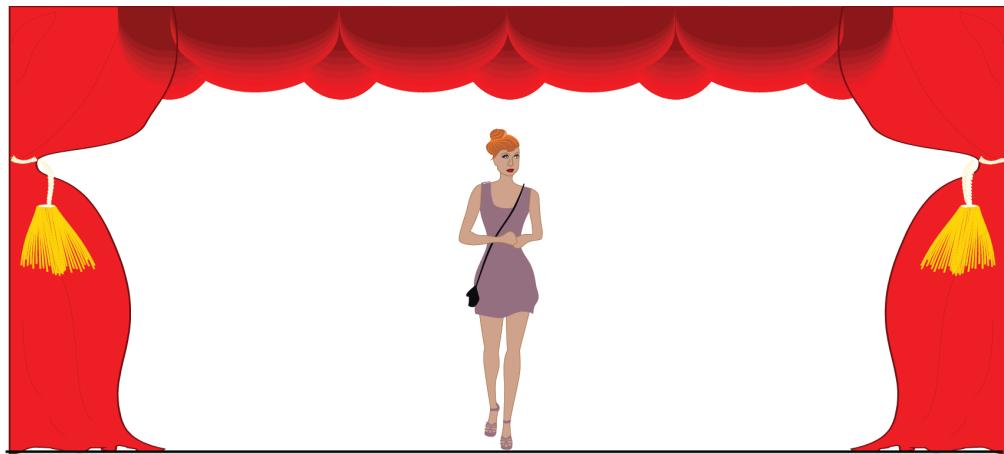
Write complete sentences stating one fact and one opinion about this selection.

Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_



GIACOMO  
**PUCCINI**  
(1858-1924)



# *La bohème:*

# "Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz)"

*by* Puccini



# Audience Etiquette Guide

## Attending the Opera

Unlike the actors on your television, performers on the stage are aware of their audience and want very much to communicate their art to you. By the time you arrive for a scheduled performance, many people (composers, singers, musicians, technicians, costume, set and lighting designers, etc.) have worked very hard to bring you their best efforts. In order to show respect for those efforts, every audience member must give the performance their full attention and avoid any behavior that interferes with the performance. Here are expected and appropriate behaviors to remember when you are attending the opera.

- 1) Turn off your cell phone and anything else you have that might beep, ring, buzz or make any sort of noise during the performance.
- 2) Walk when you are inside the performance hall - both in the lobby and the seating area.
- 3) Recordings of any kind are not allowed during the performance.
- 4) Be attentive during the performance. Keep your eyes on the stage and refrain from making noise of any kind.
- 5) Applause is welcome! Enjoy the performance and respond to what you see. Unlike TV or film, every live performance is unique: only you and the performers will share the experience you have in the theater. Show appreciation for the performers by applauding at the following times:
  - After the orchestra finishes playing the overture
  - At the end of each Act
  - After an aria or big ensemble selection (duet, trio, quartet, chorus number)
- 6) Refrain from bringing gum, candy, or food into the theater.
- 7) Make sure to use the restroom prior to the performance. Once the opera begins, stay in your seat until intermission.

## Interesting Information about the Austin Opera Performance

Austin Opera concludes its 2018–2019 season with one of the most enduring works in all of opera: Puccini's ***La bohème***, April 27–May 5, 2019, at the Long Center.

Puccini's sweeping story of young bohemians struggling to fulfill their dreams and find true love contains some of the most beloved music in all of opera. ***La bohème*** is frequently referenced in popular culture—from the Academy Award-winning film *Moonstruck* to the Tony-winning musical *Rent*—making the story and its music instantly recognizable to even newcomers to opera.

The Cast will include Kang Wang as Rodolfo, Elizabeth Caballero as Mimi, Noel Bouley as Marcello and Susannah Biller as Musetta.

The Production will be conducted by Maestro Peter Bay and stage directed by Alison Moritz.

Austin Opera's production of ***La bohème*** originated at San Francisco Opera. The Scenic Designer is Michael Yeargan and the Costume Designer is Walther Mahoney.

The performance will be sung in Italian with English supertitles.

These ***La bohème*** educational materials are an integral piece of the complete ***La bohème*** audio/visual PowerPoint package commissioned by Austin Opera from Mighty Music Publishing.

To learn more about this product and collaboration, or to inquire about purchase of the complete package for your organization, contact Mollie Tower, Mighty Music Publishing, [MightyMusic.Mollie@gmail.com](mailto:MightyMusic.Mollie@gmail.com).