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**AUSTIN
OPERA**



Dear Teachers,

A special welcome from Austin Opera!

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

For Austin Opera's 2019-2020 Season, **ACCESS OPERA** provides curriculum materials that are designed to help you and your students learn about the operas ***Rigoletto*** and ***Turandot*** as well as their composers and librettists.

Included in the lessons and PowerPoints are three curated music selections from the operas ***Rigoletto*** and ***Turandot***, with a focus on musical elements highlighted in Animated Listening Maps and Classroom Activities.

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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Rigoletto:

"La donna è mobile"

BY GIUSEPPE VERDI



Rigoletto: “La donna è mobile”

by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

About the Composer

- Giuseppe Verdi was born in the village of Roncole, Italy in 1813 and was a Romantic Period composer.
- Verdi's musical talent became apparent at an early age while serving in the choir and taking organ lessons at his church. He became the official paid organist at the age of eight.
- At age 20, Verdi moved to Milan to pursue a career as a composer.
- Verdi's first opera was produced in Milan and was a great success. It was followed by many more operas such as *La traviata* and *Otello*.
- During the two days before his death, the town officials covered the street outside his room with straw so the sounds of horse hooves would not disturb his rest. He died of a stroke on January 27, 1901.



About the Music

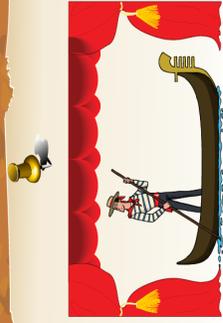
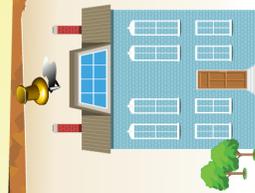
- *Rigoletto*, an opera in three acts by Verdi (Italian libretto by Francesco Maria Piave) premiered at La Fenice opera house in Venice on March 11, 1851.
- Based closely on the controversial 1832 play *Le Roi s'amuse* (*The King Amuses Himself*), also performed in English as *The King's Fool*) by Victor Hugo, Verdi's opera was nearly kept off the stage by censors. The French government, horrified by its disrespectful portrayal of a monarch, declared it immoral. Because of this, the lead character was changed from a King to a Duke.

Vocabulary

- opera** a story told through music, generally sung throughout
- aria** an elaborate melody sung by one person with accompaniment, as in an opera or oratorio
- tenor** a higher male singing voice

More

The opera's best-known aria is “La donna è mobile,” in which the womanizing Duke of Mantua sings about the fickleness of women. Rehearsals for this aria were done in secret because the tune was considered so catchy it might be stolen. As it turned out, it is said that every Gondolier in Venice was singing it the day after the first performance.

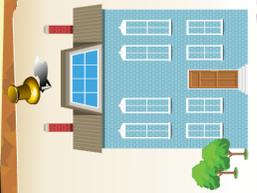


Rigoletto: “La donna è mobile”

de Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Acerca del Compositor

- Giuseppe Verdi nació en la Villa de Roncole, Italia en 1813 y fue un compositor del Período Romántico.
- Su familia se mudó a una ciudad más grande donde estudió música y a la edad de 20 años el se mudó a Milán para perseguir su carrera como compositor.
- Ahí montó su primera ópera, la cual fue un gran éxito y fue seguida por muchas otras óperas como *La traviata* y *Otello*.
- Durante los últimos dos días antes de su muerte, el funcionario municipal cubrió la calle afuera de su cuarto con paja para que los sonidos de los cascos de los caballos no interrumpieran su sueño. El murió de un derrame cerebral el 27 de enero de 1901.
- Su funeral sigue siendo la asamblea pública más grande de un acontecimiento en la historia de Italia. Un coro y una orquesta interpretaron un extracto de su ópera *Nabucco*.



Vocabulario

opera es una composición dramática y musical en la que un texto dialogado se canta

aria es una melodía elaborada para ser cantada con acompañamiento, como en una ópera o un oratorio

tenor es la voz humana masculina más aguda

La Pieza Musical

- *Rigoletto*, una ópera de tres actos de Verdi (libreto italiano de Francesco Maria Piave) fue estrenada en el teatro de ópera La Fenice en Venecia el 11 de marzo de 1851.
- Basada en la controversial obra de 1832, *Le Roi s’amuse (El Rey Se Entretiene a Sí Mismo)*; también interpretada en inglés como *El Bufón del Rey*, de Victor Hugo. La ópera de Verdi fue casi prohibida en los escenarios por los censores. El gobierno francés, horrorizado por la irrespetuosa representación de un monarca, la declaró inmoral. Por esta razón el personaje principal fue cambiado de Rey a Duque.

Más Información

El aria más conocida de la ópera es “La donna è mobile”, en la cual el mujeriego duque de Mantua canta a cerca de las inconsistencias de la mujer. Los ensayos de esta aria se hicieron en secreto debido a que la melodía se consideraba tan pegadiza que podría ser robada. Resultó que se decía que todos los gondoleros en Venecia la estaban cantando el día después de su estreno.



Rigoletto: "La donna è mobile" by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

*La donna è mobile, qual piuma al vento,
Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind,*



LESSON OVERVIEW



Rigoletto:

"La donna è mobile"

by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

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 Lesson Unit



Student Reproducible Pages:

Background Page in English/Spanish
Italian/English Translation

Rigoletto Plot Synopsis

Checking for Understanding

Judging Quality Observations

Audience Etiquette

Interesting Facts

Verdi Portrait

Verdi Wall Sign

TIME: 2:02

CONCEPTS/VOCABULARY

aria, caesura, fermata, opera, phrase, question and answer phrases, sequence, strophic form, triple meter

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON

1. Move to show triple meter.
2. Perform theme with accurate intonation and rhythm.
3. Define strophic form.

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

***Rigoletto*: "La donna è mobile" by Verdi**



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 (recurring theme associated with a person, place or idea), and a closer approach to equality between vocal and instrumental elements. Invite students to name a character that has his/her own special musical theme. (i.e. Darth Vader's theme)

Introduce the concept of *triple meter*.

- ◆ Review with students conducting patterns for 4/4 and 3/4. Direct students to listen to the teacher sing or play a recording of the aria. Ask students to discover the meter of the piece by showing you the correct conducting pattern. Alternative - march for 4/4, sway for 3/4. Notice the *caesura*, a pause, an interruption or a break in the music, that happens at the end of the introduction.

Tell students they will hear the aria "*La donna è mobile*" from the opera ***Rigoletto***.



TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

1) Have students:

- ◆ Read or listen to background information on Verdi (VAIR-dee) and this selection as you view the PowerPoint. View the Composer Portrait and Wall Sign on the PowerPoint.
- ◆ Read or listen to the ***Rigoletto*** Plot Synopsis and the Interesting Information Page.
- ◆ Define Concepts/Vocabulary for this lesson.

2) Review the listening map.

- ◆ Identify the text box at the top. Italian lyrics will display as heard.
- ◆ Notice the houses along the canal which represent the phrases. The phrases in the first 4 houses are question/answer phrases. The 3 houses leading to the fermata are a sequence. The whole animation of this aria will repeat for the second verse which is in strophic form.
- ◆ Notice the windows in the houses which represent the measures of 3 beats in each section. The top and bottom windows in each row will light up together.

3) Listen to, Sing and/or Play the Theme found in the NOTATED THEME section of the lesson. Use words or a neutral syllable. Move by swaying on the strong beat or conducting while singing.

4) Listen to the selection and follow the map twice, as time allows. Follow the lights in the windows and the gondolier the first time. Watch the text box on a second listening. Click on the arrow at the bottom of the Animated Listening Map slide to start the Animated Listening Map.

5) Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ladonnaBocelli> to hear "*La donna è mobile*" performed by Andrea Bocelli, Live From Piazza Dei Cavalieri, Italy / 1997. Discuss with students that the performer is blind, having lost his sight after a soccer accident when he was just 12.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ladonnaviolincello> to hear a violin and cello duet version of this selection.

The PPT includes links to these YouTube videos that we do not own, hosted on SafeShare.

LESSON



Rigoletto:

"La donna è mobile" by Verdi



ASSESSMENT



After discussing the Audience Etiquette Page, attend the performance of **Rigoletto** 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. c 2. a 3. a 4. b 5. c



Complete the Judging Quality Observations Page after viewing the videos.

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:

After reading the Plot Synopsis, discuss some of these ideas with students: How do the characters in the opera communicate with each other? Could they have improved their relationships through empathy? How do the characters in the opera try to influence each other? Are they experiencing peer pressure? What pressures act on the characters in the opera? How do they respond? Do the characters in **Rigoletto** seem mentally healthy? In the opening scene, everyone seems agitated and mad. Why? Is the Duke responsible for the meanness at court? He has created the atmosphere. Why can't Rigoletto stop thinking about the curse? Will it bring him bad luck? Why is Rigoletto so protective of Gilda? Is she really at risk of being hurt? Are the characters desensitized to violence?

LESSON



Rigoletto:

"La donna è mobile" by Verdi



VOCABULARY/DEFINITIONS

aria an elaborate melody sung by one person with accompaniment, as in an opera or oratorio

caesura a pause, an interruption or a break in the music

fermata a symbol that means a note or rest is held longer than the normal duration

opera a story told through music, generally sung throughout

phrase a set of notes that forms a complete musical "thought" or idea

question and answer phrases a pair of musical phrases where the first idea does not feel complete without the second

Romantic Period (1820-1900) Period of music history with more freedom of expression and emotional content in the music and nationalism in music was important. New music forms included the art song and chamber music. Also a dramatic expansion in the size of the orchestra and in the dynamic range and diversity of instruments used in this ensemble.

sequence a musical pattern that is repeated starting on a different pitch level each time

strophic form all verses or stanzas are sung to the same music

triple meter beats in groups of 3



PERFORMANCE CREDITS

Munich Radio Orchestra, Singer - Piero Cappuccilli

LESSON

Rigoletto: "La donna è mobile" by Verdi



NOTATED THEME

Theme

$\text{♩} = 138$

La don-na è mo-bi-le qual piu-ma al ven - to mu-ta d'ac-cen - to e di pen - sie - ro.

9

Sem-pre un a ma-bi-le leg-gia-dro vi - so, in pian-to o in ri - so è men-zo-gne - ro.

LESSON

Rigoletto: "La donna è mobile" by Verdi



TRANSLATION

La donna è mobile, qual piuma al vento,
Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind.

muta d'accento, e di pensiero.
She changes the tone of her voice, and her thoughts.

Sempre un amabile, leggiadro viso,
Always a lovely, graceful face,

in pianto o in riso, è menzognero.
in tears or in laughter, she is always lying.

La donna è mobile, Qual piuma al vento,
Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind.

muta d'accento - e di pensier!
she changes the tone of her voice and her thoughts.

È sempre misero, chi a lei s'affida,
He is always miserable who trusts in her,

chi le confida, mal cauto il cuore!
who to her confides, his unwary heart!

Pur mai non sentesi felice appieno,
Yet, he can never be happy

chi su quel seno non liba amore!
who doesn't drink love.

La donna è mobile, Qual piuma al vento,
Woman is fickle, like a feather in the wind.

muta d'accento - e di pensier!
she changes the tone of her voice and her thoughts.

Synopsis

The Story of *Rigoletto*



Place: Mantua, Italy

Time: 16th Century

Prelude – performed by the orchestra

ACT I

Scene 1: A grand room in the palace of the Duke of Mantua.

Dance music can be heard from offstage as gentlemen and their wives circulate through the room. The Duke tells the courtier Borsa about the woman he has seen in church every Sunday for the last three months. He has discovered she lives in a remote alley where a mysterious man visits her every evening. Among the ladies at the ball is the Countess Ceprano. They comment on her beauty and the Duke agrees. Borsa warns the Duke that Count Ceprano may overhear them, but the Duke does not care, one woman is just like another and fidelity is detestable. He flirts with the Countess and leads her off stage. Her jealous husband follows them as Rigoletto enters and mocks him. An excited Marullo enters; he has discovered that Rigoletto has a mistress!

The Duke and Rigoletto discuss how they can get rid of Ceprano in order to leave the field clear for the Duke. Rigoletto makes several sarcastic and boorish suggestions which an angry Ceprano overhears. The jester's master reproves Rigoletto for always going too far with a joke. Rigoletto just laughs; he knows he is protected from the hatred of the courtiers. These courtiers decide to take revenge on the jester, and they will meet that night to formulate a plan. Suddenly, Count Monterone bursts in. His daughter has been seduced by the Duke, and he swears revenge. The jester mocks him with a mixture of buffoonery and evil. When the distraught Count Monterone curses both the jester and the Duke for laughing at a father's grief, Rigoletto recoils in horror, visibly shaken.

Scene 2: An alley with Rigoletto's house on one side and the Cepranos' on the other.

A shaken Rigoletto enters, still muttering about the curse. He is accosted by Sparafucile, a "hitman" for hire, who offers his services to Rigoletto. Sparafucile can have his sister, Maddalena, lure any victim to his inn and dispose of him there. If Rigoletto has no use for his services just then, he can be found every evening at the same place. After Sparafucile leaves, Rigoletto broods that they are the same: both of them kill, Rigoletto with his tongue and Sparafucile with his dagger. He blames his own corruption on nature, which made him a hunchback, and on the sneering courtiers for whom he serves.

Still thinking about the curse, Rigoletto enters his house to be greeted by his loving daughter, Gilda. Noticing that her father is troubled, she begs him to tell her what is wrong. Gilda, not knowing her own history, wants him to tell her who he really is and who her mother was. Rigoletto sighs and describes his lost love, a woman who loved him despite his deformity and poverty. Sadly, she died, leaving Gilda to console him. He will not tell her anything else, only that she is his whole life. Gilda accepts his reticence and begs to be allowed to see the city. Terrified that the courtiers who hate him will discover her existence, Rigoletto begs her to keep her promise and stay home. He summons Giovanna, her companion, and asks if she locks the door every night, admonishing her to keep his daughter safe.

Thinking he hears something, he goes out to the street giving the disguised Duke a chance to sneak in and hide. The Duke slips Giovanna a money purse to keep her silent. To his surprise, he recognizes Rigoletto and realizes it is the jester's daughter whom he desires. When Rigoletto leaves, Gilda regrets that she has lied to her father by not telling him of the handsome young man who has followed her to church. Although he seems noble, she would prefer a poor man. The Duke emerges from hiding and ardently declares his love. He tells her he is a poor student named Gualtier Maldè. As she confesses her love for him, Giovanna comes in to say that she has heard footsteps outside. Fearing that Rigoletto has returned, Gilda urges Gualtier (aka the "Duke") to leave, and they sing a long and fond farewell.

Left alone, Gilda rapturously thinks of her suitor's name. She can be seen by the masked conspirators on the street who admire her beauty. Suddenly Rigoletto appears called back by new fears and still thinking of the curse. Identifying themselves, the courtiers approach him and ask him to help abduct the Countess Ceprano. He agrees and asks for a mask of his own. While putting it on they manage to blindfold him. He is told to hold the ladder while they do the abduction, and they gloat that they will now have their revenge on their torturer. As they drag the terrified Gilda away, she drops her scarf. Wondering what is happening, Rigoletto discovers the blindfold and tears it off to find the open door and Gilda's scarf. He utters an anguished *La maledizione!* —The curse!

ACT II

A room in the palace.

The Duke has been to Rigoletto's house and found the door open and Gilda gone. He is distressed, mostly for his loss, but then thinks of her tears. When the courtiers come to tell him of the abduction, the Duke realizes the victim is Gilda and rushes off to "comfort" her.

Rigoletto appears, feigning nonchalance and still playing the fool, but furtively looking around for signs of Gilda. This is the first time the courtiers realize Gilda is the jester's daughter rather than his mistress. Rigoletto realizes that the abducted woman is his daughter and that Gilda is with the Duke. The jester first asks for her return. Then, he begs them to restore his daughter to him.

Gilda rushes into the room and throws herself into her father's arms. She confesses all to him. He comforts her. Monterone is led across the stage on his way to prison, distraught because, in spite of his curse, the Duke remains unscathed. Rigoletto swears that he will seek vengeance for them both. Gilda begs him to forgive the Duke; she still loves him. Rigoletto ignores Gilda's pleas to forgive the Duke.

ACT III

Sparafucile's inn.

We are able to see both the inside of the inn and the deserted riverbank outside. The people in both respective locations cannot hear or see each other. Sparafucile is inside the inn. Rigoletto has brought Gilda, who still believes the Duke loves her, to observe his unfaithfulness for herself. The Duke appears inside, demands a room and some wine and then sings the famous aria. When he returns with the wine, Sparafucile knocks on the ceiling to call his sister, Maddalena. In a quartet, a disheartened Gilda watches the Duke flirt with Maddalena, and Rigoletto swears revenge.

Rigoletto, thinking Gilda has finally been convinced of the Duke's true nature, urges her to go home, change into the male clothing that he has prepared for her as a disguise, and flee to Verona. He will meet her there tomorrow. Sparafucile comes out and Rigoletto gives him half of the agreed upon sum. He will return at midnight to collect the body and pay the rest. Maddalena tries to save the Duke by telling him to leave the inn, but a terrible storm is approaching, and he asks for a room for the night. Maddalena begs Sparafucile to spare the handsome young man, but he refuses. She tries to persuade him to kill the jester instead and keep all of the money, but the assassin has pride in his profession. He would never betray a paying customer. Gilda



appears outside, dressed as a man, and overhears them agreeing to kill the first person who appears before midnight. Determined to save the Duke's life at the expense of her own life, she knocks at the door. The door is opened, there is a cry, and then silence.

Rigoletto returns, gleefully anticipating his revenge. Midnight strikes and Sparafucile comes out with a sack supposedly holding the Duke's body. The jester is about to drag it to the river when he hears the Duke's voice singing. Horrified, he opens the sack to find his dying daughter. Gilda begs his forgiveness and says she will pray for him in heaven. Verdi ends the opera as Gilda dies and a heartbroken Rigoletto once more cries, *La maledizione!*

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Name: _____

Class: _____



Rigoletto:
"La donna è mobile"
by _____

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

1) What is the form of "La donna è mobile"?

- a. rondo
- b. ABA
- c. strophic

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. Verdi Composes Italian Opera
- B. Verdi Composes Humorous Opera
- C. Verdi 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 "La donna è mobile"?

- 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: _____

Name _____

Teacher _____

Judging Quality Observations

Directions: Use this worksheet to compare the two different versions of Verdi's "La donna è mobile" as heard and seen on the suggested videos.

	Bocelli	Violin/Cello Duet
Timbre Listen for: Beauty of sound Appeal Appropriateness Variety Range	My observations:	
Expressiveness Listen for: Interpretation Style Phrasing/Sense Authority/conviction		
Technique Listen for: Security/Accuracy Control Difficulty Clarity/Articulation		
Presentation React to: Taste Appropriateness for occasion Expectations Choice of arrangement		
Impact React to: Emotive intensity Charisma of artist(s) Familiarity/Newness		

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 opens its 2019-2020 Season with one of opera's most gritty and exciting works: Verdi's ***Rigoletto***, November 9 – 17, 2019 at the Long Center.

This tragic story revolving around the unscrupulous Duke of Mantua, his court jester Rigoletto, and Rigoletto's stunning daughter Gilda is considered to be one of Verdi's operatic masterpieces. Rigoletto is consumed by his thirst for revenge, but his innocent daughter Gilda pays the ultimate price. The instantly recognizable score features one of the most famous arias in all of opera – the Duke's "La donna è mobile" – which has become part of the fabric of popular culture.

Starring Michael Chioldi, back for his sixth role with Austin Opera, as Rigoletto, Kang Wang as the Duke who returns for back to back performances after his star turn in ***La bohème*** in the spring of 2019, and Madison Leonard in her Austin Opera debut as Gilda – this opera of extremes and moral ambiguity offers both the grand and the intimate. Traditionally staged, with sets from New Orleans Opera and costumes from Utah Opera, this production will have you on the edge of your seats.

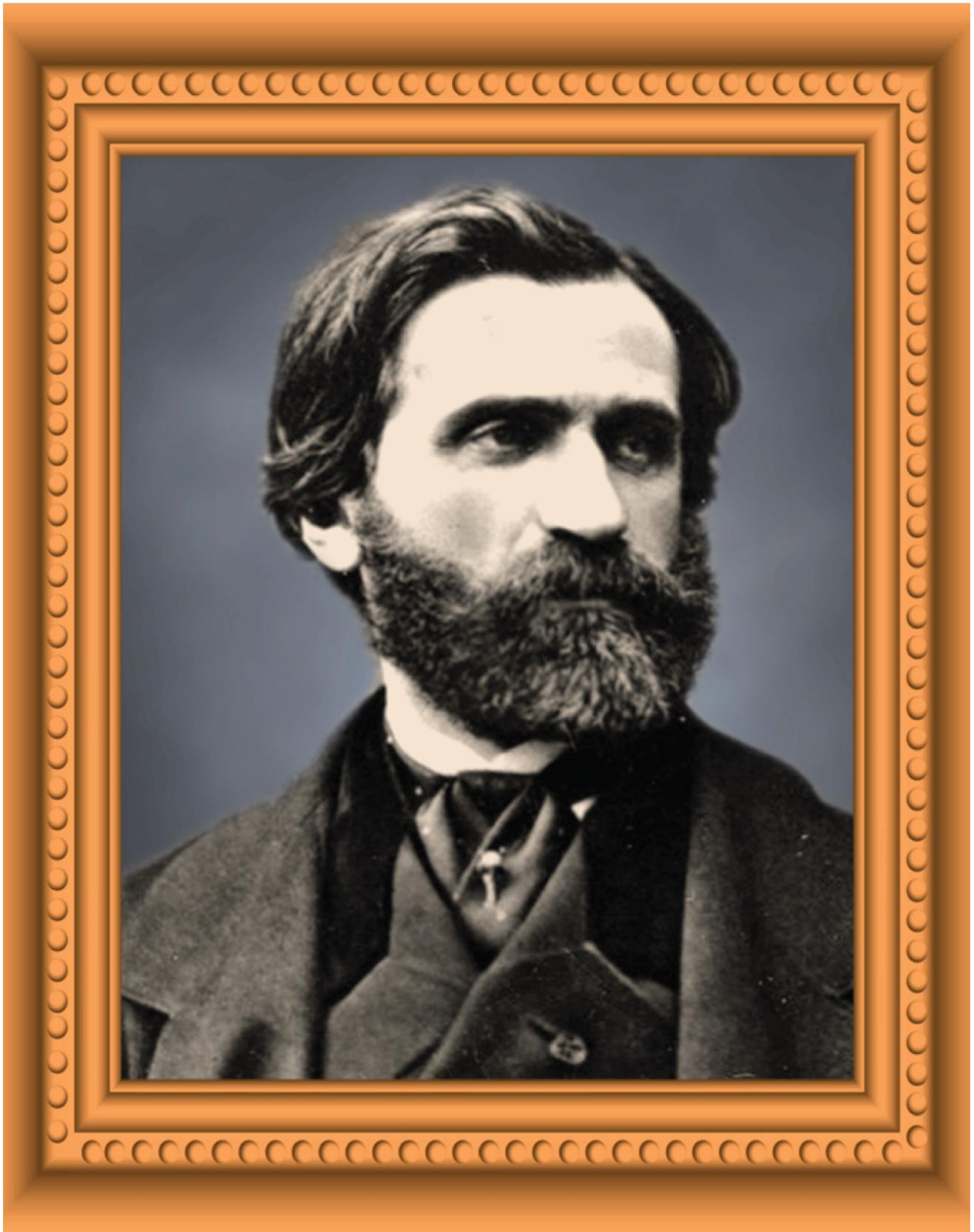
The production will be conducted by Robert Wood and stage directed by Tara Faircloth.

The Scenic Designer is Lawrence Shafer and the Costume Designer is Susan Memmott Allred.

The performance will be sung in Italian with English supertitles.

These ***Rigoletto*** educational materials are an integral piece of the complete **ACCESS OPERA: *Rigoletto*** 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.



GIUSEPPE
VERDI
(1813-1901)



Rigoletto:
"La donna è mobile"
by Verdi

