



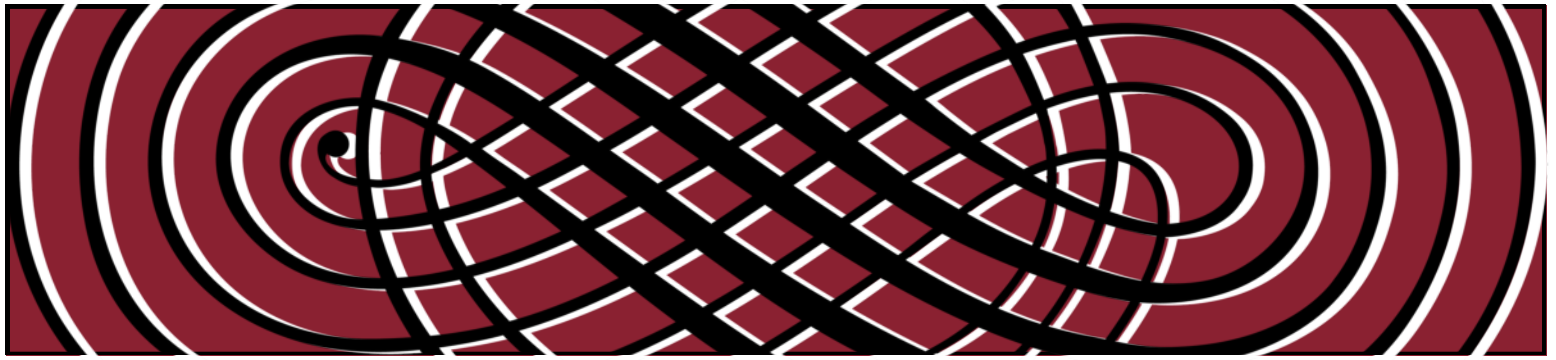
# STUDY GUIDE

Feb. 9 - 10, 2026

The Tobin Center

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Dear Friends,

We are pleased to share this Interactive Study Guide for OPERA San Antonio's original Student Matinee, *OPERA Meets Broadway*. This first-of-its-kind program, sponsored by Tobin Generation NEXT, blends opera and musical theatre, offering students a unique and engaging cross-genre experience at The Tobin Center.

Inside, you'll find TEKS-aligned activities, background on both opera and musical theatre, and introductions to the talented artists bringing this innovative production to life.

Thank you for your dedication to arts education. We are proud to partner with you and look forward to welcoming your students to this exciting new program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Madeline Elizondo".

Madeline Elizondo  
Director of Education & Outreach  
OPERA San Antonio

# About OPERA San Antonio

Founded in 2010, OPERA San Antonio has become a vibrant cornerstone of the city's cultural scene. Under the leadership of E. Loren Meeker as General & Artistic Director and Francesco Milioto as Music Director since 2020, the company brings two world-class opera productions to life each season at The Tobin Center. These performances, which showcase operatic masterpieces and contemporary operas, unite acclaimed international and national artists, celebrated local voices, and The Orchestra San Antonio, creating unforgettable experiences that resonate with audiences of all ages.

OPERA San Antonio's mission is to produce opera of uncompromising artistic quality and to enrich our community through educational outreach and social engagement. Programs include "Explore Opera for Kids!", a family-friendly intro to opera in partnership with the San Antonio Public Library system; "Behind the Scenes", which provides students with access to discussions with the creative team and invitations to attend productions free of charge at The Tobin Center; "OPERA in Schools", a program offering interactive presentations for K-12 students in local schools; a Student Matinee series with curated programs offered in collaboration with local theaters, and a summer Young Artist Program in collaboration with The Orchestra San Antonio offering training for artists at all levels.

The company is dedicated to preserving and sharing opera as a relevant, inspirational, and accessible art form for residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The civic premise of OPERA San Antonio is that the community needs, and the citizens deserve, access to the major performing arts.





# What to expect at The Matinee

In **OPERA Meets Broadway**, two amazing worlds come together! Get ready to hear **opera's powerful arias** and **Broadway's showstopping hits** performed live by professional artists from OPERA San Antonio. This high-energy performance is fun, exciting, and full of music that shows how storytelling comes to life on stage. You'll see how opera and musical theatre connect, inspire each other, and continue to shape the way we experience music today!

## BE QUIET AND COURTEOUS.

The performers are singing live, in opera, often without microphones, so your silence helps everyone hear the music and story.

## APPLAUD AFTER BIG MOMENTS.

If you hear an impressive song or powerful high note, feel free to clap! In opera, audiences often applaud after arias (solo songs) using Italian words such as "Bravo", "Brava", and "Bravi Tutti!".

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Don't worry if some songs are in another language, in opera, this is the norm! There will be videos with translations on a large screen above the stage so you can understand everything.

## DRESS LIKE YOURSELF!

Whether you wear that dress or suit you've been saving for a special occasion, or you're more comfortable going out in jeans or basketball shorts, dress like yourself at the theatre.



# TEKS

## Grades 2–5

§117.102–§117.105 (2)(A), (B): Perform a varied repertoire of music; sing and move to demonstrate beat, tempo, and dynamics.

§117.102–§117.105 (3)(B): Identify music from diverse cultures and historical periods.

§117.102–§117.105 (4)(B): Compare music forms and styles.

## Grades 6–8

§117.112–§117.115 (2)(A), (B): Perform and interpret music of various styles and cultures.

§117.112–§117.115 (3)(B): Analyze the elements of music in various genres.

§117.112–§117.115 (4)(B): Compare and contrast music from different historical periods.

## High School (Levels I–IV)

§117.312–§117.315 (2)(A): Demonstrate understanding of music in relation to history and culture.

§117.312–§117.315 (3)(A), (B): Compare performance styles across historical and contemporary works.

§117.312–§117.315 (5)(A): Analyze stylistic features and performance practices of specific genres.

## Choir TEKS

### Middle School (Levels I–III)

§117.116–§117.118 (2)(A): Sing music from different styles and periods.

§117.116–§117.118 (3)(B): Identify characteristics of music from diverse cultures.

§117.116–§117.118 (5)(B): Compare vocal techniques between genres.

### High School Choir (Levels I–IV)

§117.316–§117.319 (2)(B): Sing repertoire from multiple musical periods and genres, including opera and musical theatre.

§117.316–§117.319 (3)(B): Analyze cultural and historical influences on vocal styles.

§117.316–§117.319 (5)(B): Evaluate performance styles with attention to diction, expression, and technique.

## Theatre TEKS

### Grades 2–5

§117.111–§117.114 (2)(B): Interpret characters through voice and movement.

§117.111–§117.114 (4)(A): Compare live theatre performances from various genres.

### Grades 6–8

§117.208–§117.211 (3)(B): Analyze how historical and cultural contexts influence theatrical works.

§117.208–§117.211 (4)(B): Compare performance conventions in different theatrical genres.

### High School Theatre (Levels I–IV)

§117.312–§117.319 (3)(C): Compare and contrast dramatic forms across cultures and historical periods.

§117.312–§117.319 (5)(A): Analyze and apply performance techniques specific to various theatrical styles.

## Social Studies / History TEKS

### Grades 2–5

§113.15 (13)(A): Identify cultural celebrations and artistic traditions.

§113.15 (14)(B): Describe how cultural traditions are shared through performance arts.

### Grades 6–8

§113.18 (21)(B): Explain how cultural institutions promote identity through the arts.

§113.19 (26)(A): Identify significant cultural movements and their impact.

### High School

§113.41 (26)(B): Explain cultural and historical influences on performing arts genres.

§113.42 (18)(A): Analyze cultural diffusion in the performing arts.

# Opera, Operetta, & Musical Explained

## OPERA



Opera is a dramatic art form that combines music, singing, and storytelling into one powerful experience. Originating in Italy around the 1600s, opera uses a full orchestra and trained singers who perform without microphones, relying on vocal strength and technique to project their voices. The stories range from ancient myths to modern dramas, often sung in languages like Italian, French, or German. While most operas are entirely sung, some include sections of spoken dialogue—especially in styles like the German Singspiel (for example, Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*)—showing that opera can take many forms while maintaining its emphasis on emotion and musical expression

## OPERETTA



Operetta, which means “little opera,” is a lighter and often more humorous form of opera that became popular in the 19th century. While it still features classically trained singers and orchestral accompaniment, operettas include spoken dialogue between the musical numbers. The tone is usually playful, romantic, or satirical, with dance and comedy adding to the entertainment. Famous composers like Johann Strauss II and Gilbert and Sullivan helped shape the style, creating works that bridge the gap between the grandeur of opera and the accessibility of musical theatre.

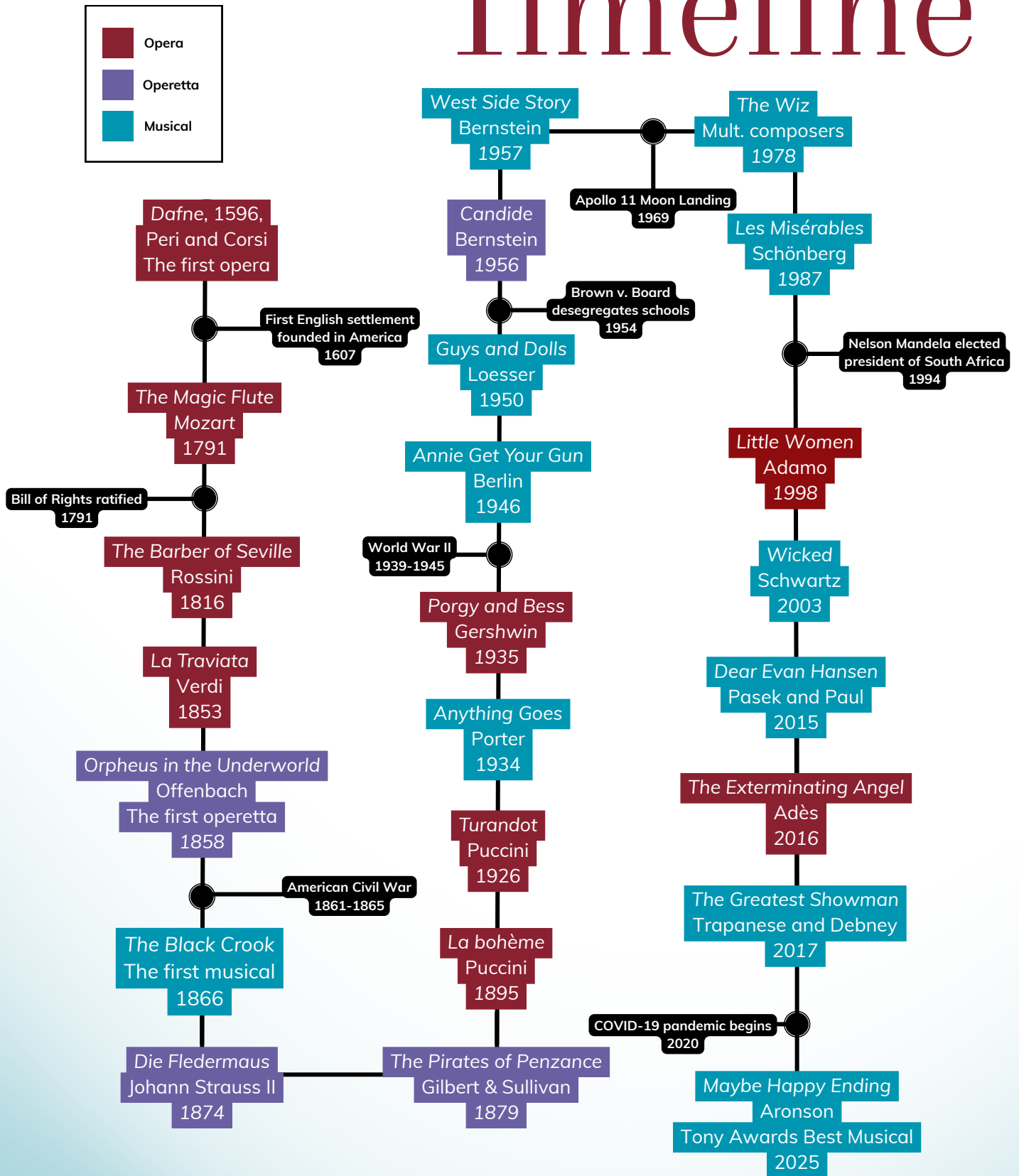
## MUSICAL THEATRE



Musical theatre blends songs, spoken dialogue, acting, and dance to tell stories in a way that feels both emotional and relatable. Emerging in the early 20th century, particularly on Broadway, musicals draw from a variety of musical styles—pop, jazz, rock, and beyond. Unlike opera, the focus is on storytelling through both speech, song, and dance, and performers typically use microphones. Musicals often explore modern themes, cultural issues, and personal stories, creating a connection with audiences through catchy melodies, expressive choreography, and memorable characters.

# How did we get here?

## Timeline





# Who works at the Theatre?

It takes more than singers, actors, and dancers to put on a show. Although you may see only the performers in the spotlight, many people behind the scenes make what you see possible.

## BACKSTAGE

The **Director / Stage Director** guides performers on movement, blocking, and expression so the audience can understand the story, whether it's sung or spoken.

The **Technical Director** coordinates lighting, set, and costumes, supervises the building and mounting of scenery onstage, and oversees the work of all crews during rehearsals and performances.

The **Stage Manager** handles administrative duties related to a production, assists the director during rehearsals, and is responsible for all backstage activity once the show opens. They tell the singers when to walk onto the stage and keep everyone safe.

The **Scenic Designer** is responsible for the visual appearance and function of all scenic elements in a show to help bring the story to life on stage. They plan or design the set and supervise its construction.

The **Lighting Designer** plans or designs the color, intensity, and placement of the light onstage.

The **Wig and Make-Up Designer** creates and oversees hairstyles, wigs & make-up.

The **Properties (Props) Manager** is responsible for selecting objects that performers use on stage, ensuring they fit the time period, story, and action of the production.

The **Choreographer** invents dances and movements and teaches them to dancers and/or cast members.

The **Stagehands or Crew** assist with the construction, installation, and operation of sets, costumes, props, and lights. They handle scene changes and help performers with technical needs during the show.

## ON STAGE

The **Cast** includes all singers and actors who appear onstage.

The **Actors** perform dialogue-driven roles, may or may not sing, depending on the show.

A **Principal** is a singer who performs a large role in the show.

**Supernumeraries** (or Supers) are actors who participate in the action but do not speak or sing.

**Supporting Roles / Comprimario** are performers who take smaller or secondary roles that support the main characters.

The **Dancers** perform trained, choreographed routines that enhance storytelling. Dance can be central (as in musicals) or supportive (as in opera).

**Chorus / Ensemble** is a group of singers who perform together, often portraying townspeople, soldiers, children, or other groups required by the story. The ensemble supports the action and can appear in large group numbers or set pieces.

# In the Orchestra

The orchestra pit is the space below and in front of the stage where the musicians perform during an opera, ballet, or musical. It's designed to balance sound between the singers or dancers on stage and the instruments below. Inside the pit, instruments are grouped into families, each with its own role.

## STRINGS

**Examples:** Violins, violas, cellos, double basses, harp

**Role:** The backbone of the orchestra. Strings provide richness, warmth, and a wide range of textures.

## WOODWINDS

**Examples:** Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon (plus auxiliary instruments like piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet, contrabassoon)

**Role:** Known for their color and character. Woodwinds often carry solos and add unique timbres.

## BRASS

**Examples:** Trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba

**Role:** Provide power, brilliance, and depth. They often highlight dramatic moments and reinforce climaxes.

## PERCUSSION

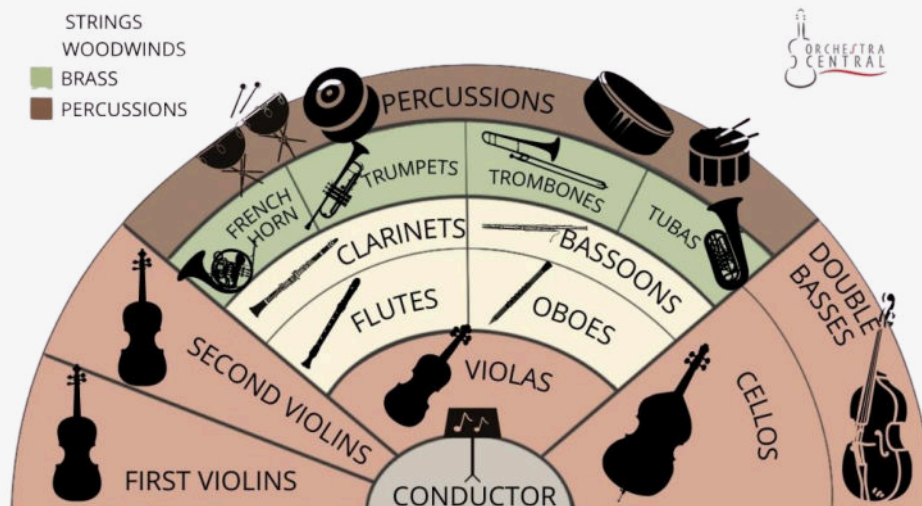
**Examples:** Timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, xylophone, marimba

**Role:** Add rhythm, impact, and special effects. Percussion can be subtle (a triangle ping) or thunderous (a timpani roll).

## KEYBOARD

**Examples:** Piano, celesta, organ, synthesizer

**Role:** Flexible instruments that allow for simultaneous notes and complex melodies through the physical layout of their keys.



## THE CONDUCTOR

The conductor, also known as the maestro/maestra, stands on a podium in front of the pit. The conductor keeps the musicians together by showing the tempo, dynamics, and cues, and connects the music in the pit with the action happening on stage.

## THE CONCERTMASTER

The leader of the first violin section. Acts as second-in-command to the conductor. Traditionally enters last, signaling the orchestra's tuning before the conductor arrives.

## NON-TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENTATION

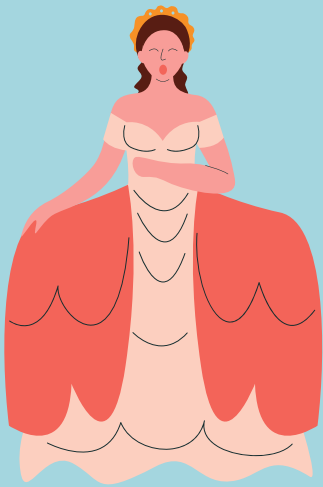
Sometimes, musicals don't use a full live orchestra. Instead, they rely on a "canned orchestra", which is a pre-recorded instrumental track. This can happen when the theater is too small, the budget is limited, or there aren't enough musicians available. Even though it's not live, the performers still sing and act live, and the canned orchestra helps make sure the music sounds full and professional for the audience.

Both opera and musical theatre can also get creative with instrumentation to match the story's vibe. For example, the musical *Hadestown* uses folk instruments like banjo and acoustic guitar to create a rootsy feel. In opera, Thomas Adès' *The Exterminating Angel* features a huge and unusual orchestra, including standard instruments alongside miniature violins, an Ondes Martenot (an early electronic instrument), and an enormous percussion section that uses everyday objects like rocks, salad bowls, newspapers, and saucepans. These unconventional choices help give the music a unique, immersive, and sometimes surreal sound.



Hadestown T. Charles Erickson, 2022

# The Voice Types



## Soprano

The highest female voice

### In opera:

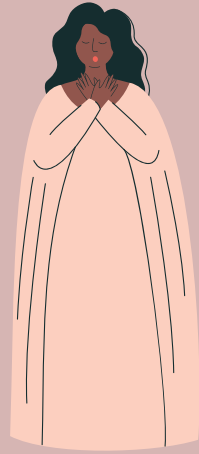
- Usually the ingenue, heroine, or romantic lead
- Voices are described as bright, agile, and soaring
- Iconic roles include Violetta from *La traviata* and Pamina from *The Magic Flute*

### In musical theatre:

- Usually the ingenue. Princess-y, feminine, romantic
- Voices have a shimmery, lyrical quality.
- Iconic roles include Glinda from *Wicked* and Christine Daaé from *The Phantom of the Opera*

[OPERA EXAMPLE]

[MT EXAMPLE]



## Mezzo

The lowest female voice

### In opera:

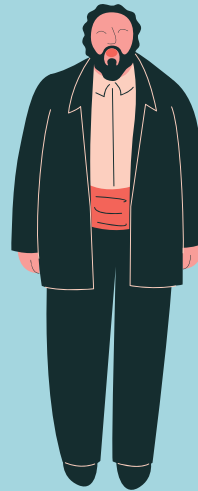
- Usually a side character, like a mother, a best friend, or a villain.
- Sometimes play "pants roles", where they depict young men and boys
- Voices are described as warm, dark, and velvet-y
- Iconic roles include Carmen from *Carmen* and Cherubino from *The Marriage of Figaro*

### In musical theatre:

- More often the leads. In musical theatre the belters are often mezzos.
- Dramatic and powerful. Most similar to pop singing.
- Iconic roles include Elphaba from *Wicked* and Roxie from *Chicago*

[OPERA EXAMPLE]

[MT EXAMPLE]



## Tenor

The highest male voice

### In opera:

- Usually the hero or romantic lead
- Voices are described as bright, clear, and dazzling
- Iconic roles include Rodolfo in *La bohème* and Calaf in *Turandot*

### In musical theatre:

- Frequently the male lead or romantic interest
- Strong, clear, and expressive; style closer to contemporary/pop singing than classical
- Iconic roles include Tony from *West Side Story* and Raoul from *The Phantom of the Opera*

[OPERA EXAMPLE]

[MT EXAMPLE]



## Bass

The lowest male voice

### In opera:

- Usually authority figures, villains, or older characters
- Deep, rich, and resonant; often conveys gravitas or menace
- Iconic roles include Sarastro from *The Magic Flute* and Méphistophélès in *Faust*

### In musical theatre:

- Often supporting roles: fathers, mentors, or comedic characters, and villains
- Deep and full-bodied; less ornamented than opera, often closer to spoken-singing style
- Iconic roles include Hades in *Hadestown* and Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd*

[OPERA EXAMPLE]

[MT EXAMPLE]



# Additional Terms

## MUSICAL THEATRE & OPERA

<b>Blocking:</b> Directions for where actors stand and move on stage. Given during blocking rehearsals. (Tip: always write it down!)	<b>Booth:</b> Where the stage manager and tech crew run lights and sound during the show.	<b>Call Time:</b> The time everyone must be at the theatre.	<b>Callbacks:</b> A second round of auditions to help the director make final casting choices.
<b>Cast Party:</b> A celebration for the cast and crew after the show.	<b>Curtain Call:</b> When actors take their bows at the end of the show.	<b>Curtain:</b> The big drape that hides the stage.	<b>Downstage:</b> The front of the stage, closest to the audience.
<b>Dress Parade:</b> When actors show their new costumes to the director and designer.	<b>Dress Rehearsal:</b> A full run of the show in costume, usually right before opening night.	<b>House:</b> Where the audience sits.	<b>Line:</b> The words an actor speaks. Also what actors say in rehearsal when they forget their words ("Line!").
<b>Off-Book:</b> When actors have memorized their lines.	<b>On-Book:</b> The person following along in the script, ready to feed lines or correct mistakes.	<b>Pit:</b> The area where the orchestra plays.	<b>Props:</b> The handheld items actors use on stage (like books, cups, or letters).
<b>Proscenium:</b> The frame or arch that separates the stage from the audience.	<b>Spike Marks:</b> Tape markings that show where props or set pieces go.	<b>Stage Left:</b> The actor's left when facing the audience.	<b>Stage Right:</b> The actor's right when facing the audience.
<b>Strike:</b> To remove or take down something from the stage (like the set after the show).	<b>Tech Week:</b> The final week of rehearsals before opening night.	<b>Techies:</b> The backstage crew who handle lights, sound, and set changes.	<b>Upstage:</b> The back of the stage, farthest from the audience.
<b>Aria:</b> A solo song in an opera that shows off a character's emotions and voice.	<b>Cadenza:</b> A short, showy passage—often improvised—at the end of a song.	<b>Composer:</b> The person who writes the music for the opera. The composer works closely with the librettist to bring the story to life through sound.	<b>Diva:</b> A leading female opera singer; literally means "goddess."
<b>Duet:</b> A song for two characters, often showing their relationship or conflict.	<b>Ensemble:</b> A musical number for several singers; can include duets, trios, quartets, or full group scenes.	<b>Librettist:</b> The person who writes the words (libretto) of the opera — like the scriptwriter who works with the composer.	<b>Libretto:</b> The "little book"—the words or script of the opera.
<b>Opera Buffa:</b> A light, comic opera about everyday life.	<b>Opera Seria:</b> A serious, dramatic style of opera, often about heroes, myths, or royal figures.	<b>Overture:</b> The instrumental opening music played before the opera begins, introducing main musical themes.	<b>Recitative:</b> A speech-like singing style used to tell the story between songs.
<b>Score:</b> The written music of the opera or play, including vocal and instrumental parts.	<b>Supertitles:</b> Translated lyrics projected above the stage.	<b>Tempo:</b> The speed of the music —how fast or slow a piece is performed.	<b>Vibrato:</b> A natural wavering in pitch that adds warmth to a singer's tone.

# CAST BIOS

## MUSICAL THEATRE



### **Christeena Riggs (Soprano)**

Broadway soprano Christeena Riggs made her debut as Éponine in *Les Misérables* after touring with the show and later became the first actress in Broadway history to perform both Éponine and Cosette. Her extensive credits include Betty Schaefer (*Sunset Boulevard*), Louisa Eshton (*Jane Eyre*), Marguerite (*The Scarlet Pimpernel*), Cinderella (*Cinderella* with Eartha Kitt), and Sandy (*Grease*). She has also appeared in *Kiss Me, Kate*, *A Little Night Music*, *Children of Eden*, *Wicked* (u/s Glinda – U.S. Tour), and more. Riggs' career reflects her range and longevity as both a Broadway star and touring performer.



### **Mary Morrow (Soprano)**

San Antonio-based soprano Mary Morrow is known for her clear tone and versatility across genres. A seasoned performer with over 25 musical theatre credits, her favorites include *Les Misérables*, *Oklahoma!*, *Grease*, and *The Secret Garden*. Her opera debut came in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Andrea Bocelli, followed by featured roles with Alamo City Opera, Texas Hill Country Opera, and OPERA San Antonio. She also sings with the San Antonio Mastersingers and has toured extensively through Europe. Passionate about arts education, Mary participates in outreach with OPERA San Antonio and the San Antonio Symphony and performs locally with her band, Replay.



### **Paige Berry (Mezzo-Soprano/Featured Dancer)**

Mezzo-soprano and dancer Paige Berry is the founder of Trilogy Dance Center and co-founder of Maven Collaborative, where she consults with nonprofits and leads leadership and communication workshops. A familiar face in San Antonio's arts community, she has starred as Reno Sweeney (*Anything Goes*), Adelaide (*Guys and Dolls*), and Audrey (*Little Shop of Horrors*), earning an ATAC nomination for Outstanding Female Lead. Paige holds degrees in Communications (PR) and Business Administration from UTSA. She is also co-host of the Mavens Talk podcast and proud mother of two young music lovers, Sawyer and Sutton.



### **Mark Stringham (Tenor)**

Mark Stringham is the Chair & Producing Director of Theatre Arts at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas, with a background in musical theatre and classical voice and over three decades of experience in the performing arts. He has collaborated on productions across the country, including the Royal Shakespeare Company, The Public Theater (NY), Atlantic Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Humana Festival of New American Plays, and Cleveland Playhouse, and has worked with New Dramatists to develop new musicals and plays for Broadway and regional theatre. As an educator and director, he guides students in acting, movement, and ensemble-based performance while fostering an appreciation for musical theatre and opera as interdisciplinary art forms. Mark's creative approach emphasizes clarity, emotional honesty, and a deep respect for text and score, and he is honored to join Opera San Antonio to contribute his passion for music-driven storytelling to the company's work.

# CAST BIOS

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## OPERA



### **Yulia Lysenko (Soprano)**

Ukrainian soprano Yulia Lysenko, praised for her “enchanted timbre” and “overwhelming emotional power,” began her career with Lviv National Opera and has performed throughout Europe and Asia. A second-prize winner on Ukraine’s TV show *Stars in Opera* (the local adaptation of *Popstar to Opera Star*), she has since built an international reputation. Following her American debut as Cio-Cio-San in Puccini’s *Madame Butterfly* with Princeton Festival in 2018, she made Texas her home base. Her extensive repertoire includes leading roles such as Verdi’s *Violetta* (*La Traviata*) and *Gilda* (*Rigoletto*), Puccini’s *Mimi* (*La bohème*), and Bizet’s *Micaëla* (*Carmen*).



### **Madeline Elizondo (Mezzo-Soprano)**

Mezzo-soprano Madeline Elizondo, OPERA San Antonio’s Director of Education & Outreach, began with the company as an outreach artist and founded the *Explore Opera for Kids!* program with the San Antonio Public Library in 2017. Her operatic roles include *Santuzza* and *Mamma Lucia* (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), the *Mother* (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*), *Third Lady* (*The Magic Flute*), *Tisbe* (*La Cenerentola*), and *Hansel* (*Hansel and Gretel*). As a concert soloist, she has performed *The Messiah*, *Elijah*, and Mahler’s *Der Abschied*. Madeline has also portrayed Susan B. Anthony in *The Mother of Us All* at the McNay Art Museum. A versatile artist, she has appeared at major jazz festivals across Texas and is known for her dynamic range across genres.



### **William J. Chapman (Tenor)**

Tenor William J. Chapman began his musical career in the U.S. Army Band, where he specialized in trumpet performance before pursuing a BFA in Vocal Performance from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. His talent earned him top placements in national voice competitions and led to his East Coast operatic debut as *Alfred* in *Die Fledermaus* with Atlantic Coast Opera. Since then, he has performed leading roles in *La bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Il Pagliacci*, and served as an artist-in-residence with San Antonio Opera’s *Three Tenors*. His international credits include recitals for the International Chopin Society and performances in Italy’s *Ci.mus Opera Lirica* festival. Known for his “rare and intoxicating” voice, William continues to captivate audiences worldwide.



### **Brandon Morales (Bass-Baritone)**

Bass-baritone Brandon Morales has performed with opera companies across the U.S., from Portland Opera to Opera Orlando. Recent credits include *Count Carl-Magnus* (*A Little Night Music*), the *Sacristan* (*Tosca*), and *Don Pizarro* (*Fidelio*). A graduate of Texas State University and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Morales has held residencies with Arizona, Virginia, and Toledo Opera, and was an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera. Locally, he has appeared as the *Sergeant of Police* (*The Pirates of Penzance*) and *King Melchior* (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*) with OPERA San Antonio. Currently based in San Antonio, he continues performing and teaching while pursuing admission to medical school.



# ACTIVITIES



# ADAPT YOUR OWN MUSICAL OR OPERA!

Operas, musicals, and movies all love to borrow ideas from one another! Many operas have inspired musicals, and many musicals have later been turned into movies—and sometimes, movies even become musicals or operas themselves!

No matter the form, they all share the same goal: to tell a great story through characters, emotions, and music. Today, you'll take your favorite movie and reimagine it as an opera or a musical.



## STEP 1: CHOOSE YOUR MOVIE

What movie are you turning into an opera or musical?

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2: GIVE IT A STAGE TITLE

Keep the same name or give it a dramatic new one!

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 3: WHO SINGS WHAT?

Think about what kind of voice each main character would have:

CHARACTER	VOICE TYPE	ADDITIONAL NOTES

## STEP 4: PICK YOUR MUSICAL MOMENTS

Think about your movie and choose 3 key moments that could be turned into songs in your opera or musical.

For each moment, answer:

- What type of song would it be? (solo/aria, duet, or ensemble)
- Which character(s) would sing it?
- What would the music feel like? (happy, dramatic, scary, funny, etc.)

**Moment 1:**

---

**Character/s:**

---

**Song type:**

**Mood:**

---

**Moment 2:**

---

**Character/s:**

---

**Song type:**

**Mood:**

---

**Moment 3:**

---

**Character/s:**

---

**Song type:**

**Mood:**

---

**STEP 5: USE THIS PAGE TO DESIGN A POSTER:**

# RENT

VS

# *La bohème*

*Rent* and *La bohème* both tell the story of young artists facing love, friendship, and hardship in a big city. Puccini's opera is the original, set in 19th-century Paris, while Larson's musical updates it to 1990s New York with modern challenges like HIV/AIDS. This comparison shows how the same story can be reimagined across time and style.

Written in 1996 by  
Jonathan Larson

Set in 1990s New York

Follows young artists  
struggling through poverty  
and illness

Mimi

Roger

Maureen

Mark

Collins

Characters suffer from  
HIV/AIDS

Written in 1896 by  
Giacomo Puccini

Set in 1830s Paris

Follows young artists  
struggling through poverty  
and illness

Mimi

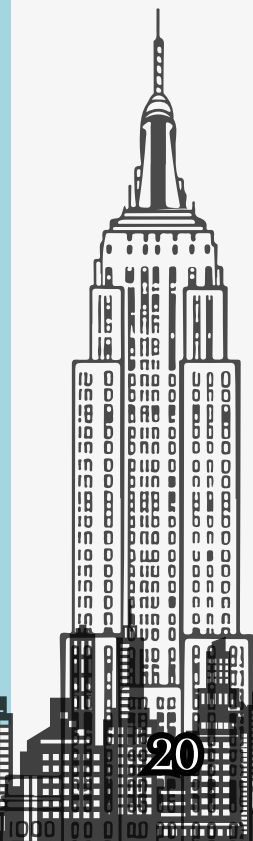
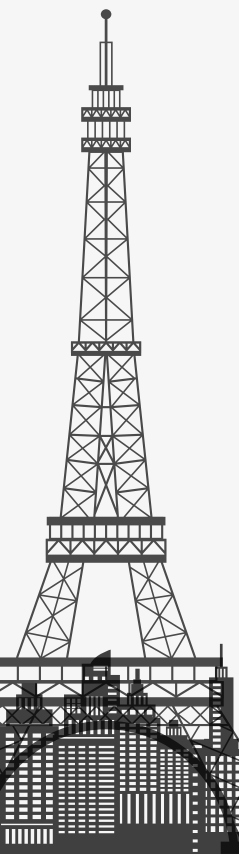
Rodolfo

Musetta

Marcello

Colline

Characters suffer from  
tuberculosis





# RENT VS LA BOHÈME

Did you know the musical *Rent* is based on the opera *La bohème*? Even though they take place more than a century apart, both tell stories about young artists chasing dreams, falling in love, and facing life's challenges together.

In this activity, you'll explore how *Rent* adapts the story of *La bohème*.

Using page 20 as a reference, look at the words in the word bank below. Decide whether each one belongs to *La bohème* or *Rent*, and write it in the correct column. Then, connect the *La bohème* words to their *Rent* parallels. One has already been done for you!

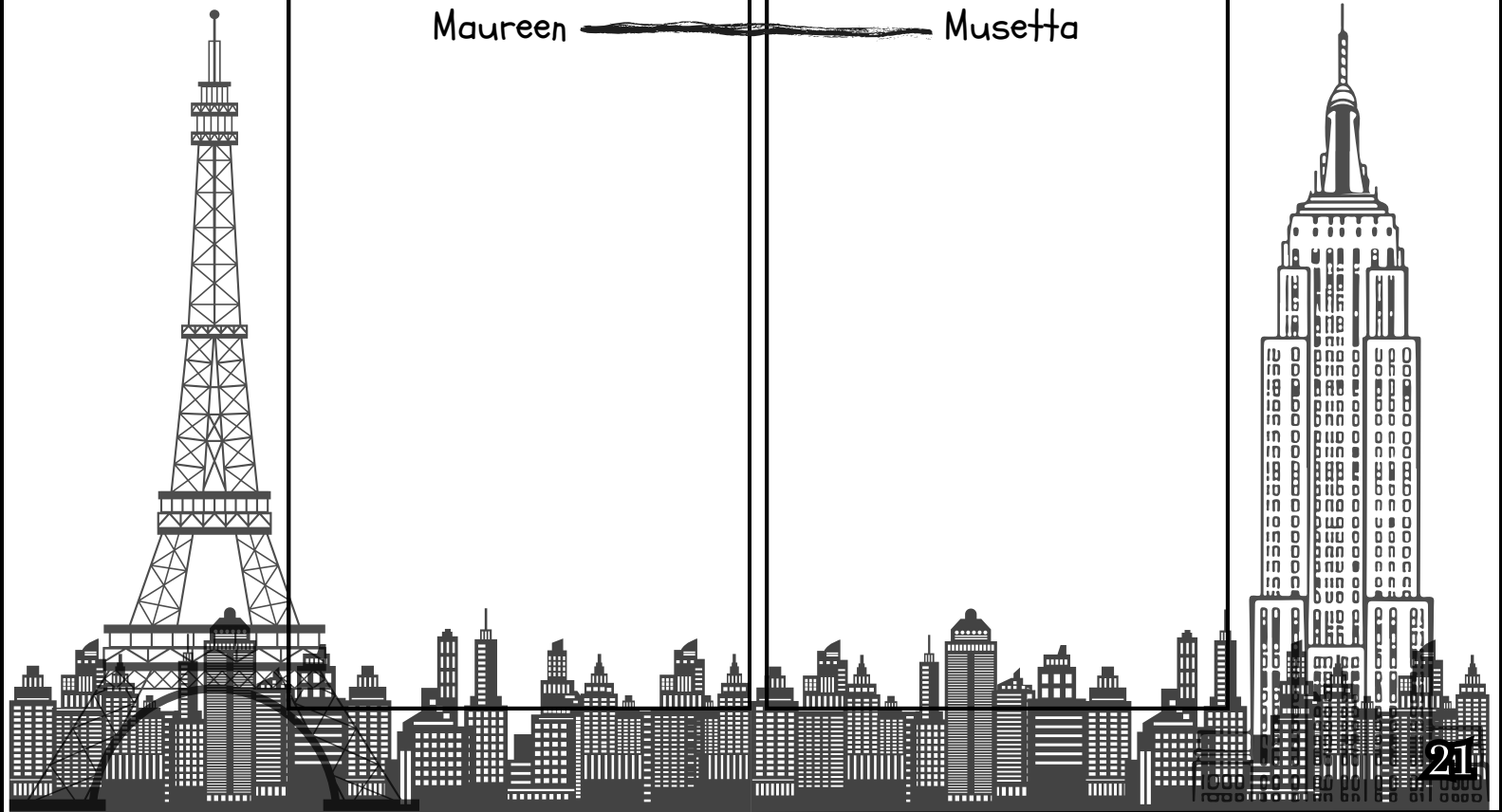
Musetta	Jonathan Larson	Roger	New York City	1896
Paris	Mimi	Opera	Rodolfo	Tuberculosis
Giacomo Puccini	1996	Collins	Marcello	HIV/AIDS
Musical	Mimí	<del>Maureen</del>	Mark	Colline

**RENT**

*La bohème*

Maureen

Musetta



# OPERA VS MUSICAL THEATRE:

## COMPARE AND CONTRAST

### OBJECTIVE

Explore what makes an opera different from a musical theatre show, and think about how both tell stories through music, performance, and characters.

Write what is unique to opera on the left, what is unique to musical theatre on the right, and what is similar in the overlapping section.

Hints: Think about how music tells a story, how characters express emotions, and how performances are designed for audiences.

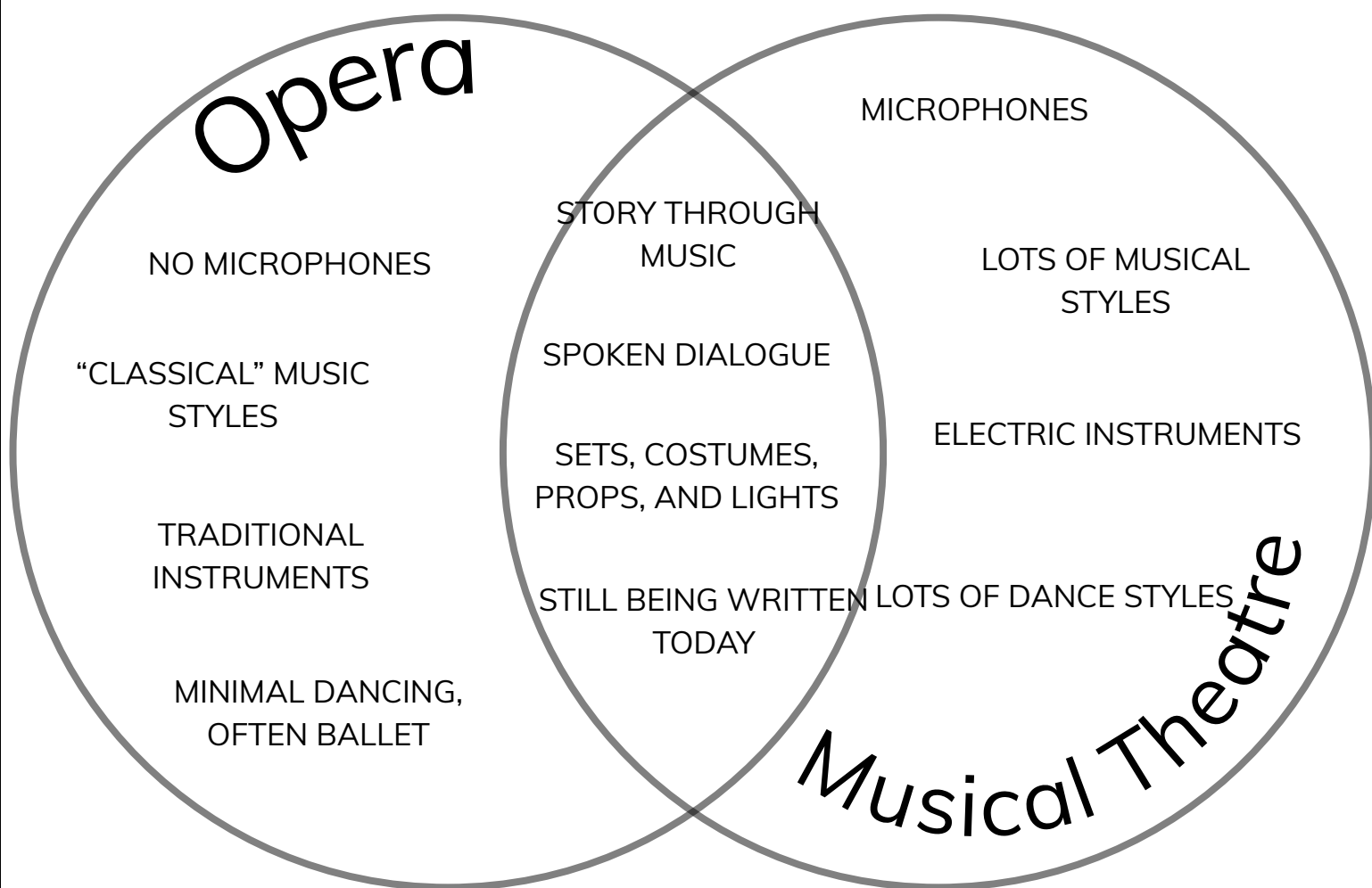
Opera

Musical Theatre

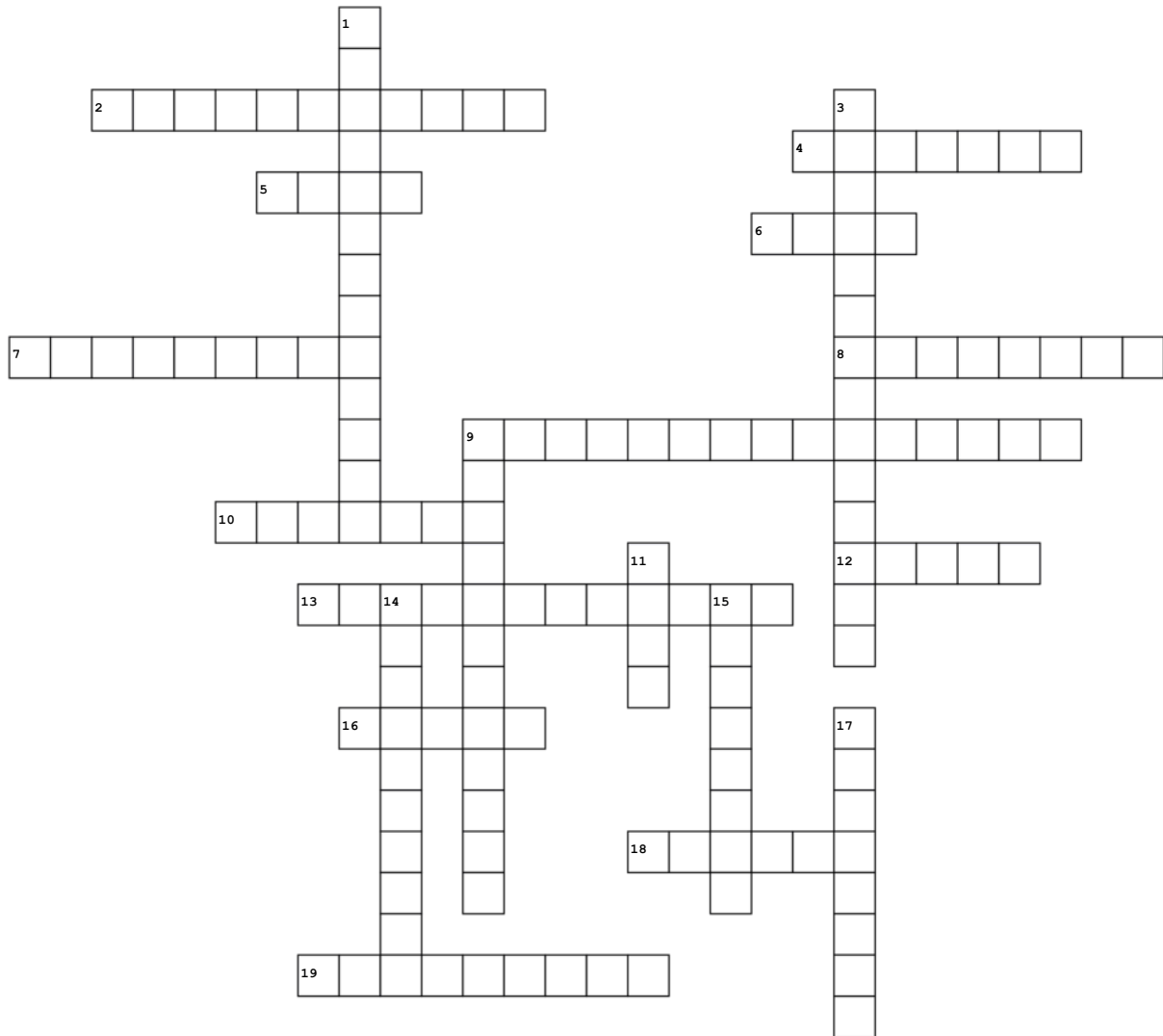
# OPERA VS MUSICAL THEATRE:

## ANSWER KEY

Note: There's no single "right" answer for this question—it's open-ended! The examples below are just some possibilities to give you an idea of what to look for.



# OPERA MEETS BROADWAY CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

2. When performers come back on stage at the end to take a bow
4. The famous composer who wrote the opera that inspired *RENT*
5. A song for two singers
6. A solo song in an opera that shows a character's emotions
7. The musicians who play live music for the show
8. The script or words of an opera
9. A recorded music track used when a live orchestra isn't available
10. A high female voice that usually plays young or heroic female characters
12. A high male voice that often plays the hero in operas
13. The person who runs things behind the scenes once the show starts
16. A big, dramatic musical story where singers perform without microphones
18. A musical theatre singer who sings loudly and powerfully, often the showstoppers
19. The person who leads the musicians during a performance

## DOWN

1. The lead musician who is second in command to the conductor
3. A live show with singing, dancing, and acting, usually with popular style music
9. The dance moves designed for a show
11. A low male voice that usually plays villains or authority figures
14. A story or show rewritten from one form to another, like a movie turned into a musical
15. A group of singers and dancers who perform together to help tell the story
17. The opening music of a show that introduces themes



# OPERA MEETS BROADWAY ANSWER KEY

