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# Going Mad: A Comprehensive Study of the Mad Scene in Gaetano Donizetti's Opera, Lucia di Lammermoor

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# SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

## "Going Mad: A Comprehensive Study of the Mad Scene in Gaetano Donizetti's Opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*"

written by

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and submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for completion of
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and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

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## PREFACE

It is difficult for me to comprehend the fact that I have come to the final phase of my journey as an Honors student at Ouachita Baptist University. These past few years in the program have offered me friendships, knowledge, and opportunities that I will remember for the rest of my life. While this thesis has my name on it, there are several important people to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude for helping me complete this rather daunting task. First off, I want to thank Ms. Lacey Johnson for helping me put my plans of costuming into action. Secondly, I would like to thank Dr. Heather Thayer for checking my musical analysis of Lucia's mad scene. There is no telling what non-existent chords I might have made up without her assistance! Next I would like to thank Dr. Margaret Garrett for being my directed study advisor not once, not twice, but three times, and for taking on the challenge of helping with my thesis. I cannot begin to list the number of roles that she has had to play to keep me sane through these past two and a half years! I also owe a great deal to my musical and theatrical collaborators. This scene would never have met my standards without the help of Mrs. Phyllis Walker, Ms. Elizabeth Baker, Mr. Drew Ervin, Mr. Joel Rogier, and Mr. John Tneoh. I owe them a great deal of gratitude for the time and effort they have put into this project. I would also like to thank Dr. Barbra Pemberton, the Honors Council, and Dr. Ben Elrod for helping fund my study in Italy through the *Ben Elrod Travel Grant*. The experience I gained during my study in Urbania has been invaluable to this thesis. To my dedicated readers Mrs. Kathy Collins, Mrs. Mary Handiboe, and Dr. Margaret Garrett I would like to say thank you so much! This thesis would hardly be presentable without

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your helpful insight. Lastly, I want to give all the praise and glory to God for providing me with the opportunity to study at Ouachita, and the chance to participate in the Honors program. His hand has truly directed me in every step I have taken and no amount of thanks that I can give will ever match the steadfast guidance He has shown me. It has been a true privilege to take part in the Honors program, and I pray that God continues to pour His blessings on the Honors students who follow.

Rachel N. Harris

# CHAPTER 1

## DESCENT INTO MADNESS: DELVING INTO MY DIRECTED STUDIES

### Introduction

I have often been asked what madness drove me to the study of the Mad Scene from Gaetano Donizetti's (1797-1848) opera *Lucia di Lammermoor*, so as an introduction to this thesis I will explain the process that has led me here. Students enrolled in the Carl Goodson Honors Program at Ouachita Baptist University are given the opportunity to participate in a directed study at some point during their academic career. Due to circumstances outside of my control however, I have been allowed to replace the two required Honors seminars with two extra directed studies. I knew from the beginning that I wanted my directed studies to somehow prepare me for my senior thesis, but I had no real clue what I wanted to study. Just as I was beginning to panic about what I would like to cover in my first directed study, God intervened.

In the spring of 2010, I was cast to play the role of Donna Anna in Ouachita's fall production of the opera *Don Giovanni* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791). I was extremely excited about the role and quickly began researching the opera. In my research I kept coming across the word *Fach* in lieu of the term voice type. I became interested in what this strange word entailed so I went to the only person I knew to ask about it, my voice teacher. Dr. Garrett explained to me that a character's *Fach* is their voice type based on the German vocal classification system. We talked over different examples of these classifications during my voice

lessons, and I began to realize that this was a topic that I would love to study further. Knowing that I had three directed studies and a senior thesis to cover this subject I set out a plan of attack that would allow me to experience the most in-depth study that I possibly could.

The original outline for my directed studies and senior thesis went as follows. My first directed study would take a historic look at the use of *Fächer* in Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth-century operas. The second directed study would cover an in-depth study of female characters from operas that I had researched in my first directed study in hopes of finding any correlation between *Fächer* and the types of characters that fall under them. During my third and final directed study, I wished to choose and study seven characters of my own *Fach* that fell under seven different character types that I created. During this semester I wanted to focus on their character analyses based on both the opera *libretti* and original source texts. For my thesis I had planned on studying the seven opera scores for these characters musically and dramatically, culminating in a final performance of a single representative *aria* from each character. My plan was well laid out, but even the best plans can go astray.

The directed studies I had outlined were ambitious, but each one seemed to go according to plan. I was able to make a table of representative operas from each time period, and while it was not exhaustive, it covered many major works that are still considered part of the central opera repertoire. On the next page is an excerpt from the table that covers the Romantic period. This table contains the name of the opera, the composer, and the *librettist(s)*. For the full table, see Appendix 1.

1. Directed Study Opera List

| Romantic (1820-1900) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Opera** | **Composer** | *Librettist(s)* |
| *Carmen* | Georges Bizet | Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy |
| *Lucia di Lammermoor*<br>*Don Pasquale* | Gaetano Donizetti | Salvadore Cammarano<br>Giovanni Ruffini |
| *Andrea Chenier* | Umberto Giordano | Luigi Illica |
| *Pagliacci* | Ruggero Leoncavallo | Ruggero Leoncavallo |
| *Les contes d'Hoffman* | Jacques Offenbach | Jules Barbier |
| *Manon Lescaut*<br>*La Bohème*<br>*Tosca* | Giacomo Puccini | Domenico Oliva and Luigi Illica<br>Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica<br>Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica |
| *Guillaume Tell* | Gioachino Rossini | Etienne de Jouy and Hippolyte-Louis-Florent Bis |
| *Macbeth*<br>*Rigoletto*<br>*La Traviata*<br>*Un Ballo in Maschera*<br>*Aida*<br>*Otello*<br>*Falstaff* | Giuseppe Verdi | Francesco Maria Piave<br>Francesco Maria Piave<br>Francesco Maria Piave<br>Antonio Somma<br>Antonio Ghislanzoni<br>Arrigo Boito<br>Arrigo Boito |
| *Tristan und Isolde*<br>*Der Ring des Nibelungen* | Richard Wagner | Richard Wagner<br>Richard Wagner |

The goal of my second directed study was to compile a list of famous female roles from the operas that I had researched. This section of the study was completed in two parts. The first part of the process led to a list of roles categorized into their respective *Fächer*. A section of the table created is located on the next page. It contains the name of each character along with a short personal description, opera of origin, composer, and sample *aria(s)*. For the full table, see Appendix 2.

## 2. Female Roles and Their *Fächer*

| Dramatic Coloratura | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Role/Character Note** | **Opera** | **Composer** | **Example *Aria*(s)** |
| Abigaille- Wants revenge on her "father" Nabucco. | *Nabucco* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Anch'io dischiuso un giorno" |
| Anne Trulove- A lovesick girl determined to find her lover. | *The Rake's Progress* | Igor Stravinsky | "No word from Tom [...] I go to him" |
| Baby Doe- Falls in love with a married man (true story). | *The Ballad of Baby Doe* | Douglas Moore | "Willow Song," "Dearest Mama," "The Silver Aria," and "Always through the changing" |
| Donna Anna- Victim of Don Giovanni who wants revenge. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non mi dir" |
| Elvira- Is betrothed to her uncle, but is in love with Ernani. | *Ernani* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Ernani, Ernani involami" |
| Fiordiligi- Is conflicted about her feelings. | *Così fan tutte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Come scoglio" and "Per pietà" |
| Helen- A conspirator. | *I vespri siciliani* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Merce, dilette amiche" |
| Konstanze- A noblewoman who is in captivity. | *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ach, ich liebte" |
| Lucia- In love with a rival of the family. She goes insane. | *Lucia di Lammermoor* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Regnava nel silenzio" and "Il dolce suono mi colpi di sua voce [...]" |
| Odabella- Wishes to take revenge on Attila. | *Attila* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Allor che i forti corrono" and "Oh! Nel fuggente nuvolo" |
| Queen of the Night- REVENGE! Pamina's mother. | *Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "O zittre nicht [...]" and "Der Hölle Rache" |
| Vitellia- Daughter of a deposed emperor. In love with Titus. | *La Clemenza di Tito* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non più di fiori" |

The second half of this directed study focused on trying to identify common character types found in operas. I devised a list of seven descriptive words that I believed many characters could fall under. My final character categories are: diva, sweet, tragic, sassy, vengeful, noble, redeemed, and, my personal favorite, the crazies. It is important to understand that I chose words that resonate with me. Other performers might disagree with the way I have categorized these roles based on their own personal interpretation of them, but there is no right or wrong way to classify these roles into character types. The final table consists of a descriptive heading, character name and short description, opera, composer, sample *aria(s)*, and *Fach*. For the full table, see Appendix 3.

3. Character Types in Opera

| The Crazies (No need for an explanation here.) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
| Donna Elvira- Loves; no, hates; no, loves Don Giovanni. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ah! Fuggi il traditor" and "Mi Tradi" | Full Lyric |
| Elvira- Daughter of a Puritan Governor-General; goes crazy. | *I Puritani* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Qui la voce [...] Vien, diletto" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Lady Macbeth- Goes CRAZY and dies! | *Macbeth* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Vieni! T'affretta [...]" and "Una macchia e qui tuttora!" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Lucia- In love with a rival of the family. She goes insane. | *Lucia di Lammermoor* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Regnava nel silenzio" and the Mad Scene | Dramatic Coloratura |
| Ophelia- Is in love with Hamlet. Goes insane. | *Hamlet* | Ambroise Thomas | "A vos jeux, mes amis [...] Partagez-vous mes fleurs!" | Dramatic or Lyric Coloratura |

I found it interesting to note that many of the roles found under each character type seemed to be similar in their vocal *Fach* classification as well. It was my conclusion that composers seemed to be using voice types as a method of character distinction. With this second step complete, I chose one role from each character type that resided in my *Fach*, or was as similar to my *Fach* as possible. The seven roles I chose were the Queen of the Night from *Die Zauberflöte* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791); Elizabeth Doe-Tabor from *The Ballad of Baby Doe* by Douglas Moore (1893-1969); Lauretta from *Gianni Schicchi* by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924); Marguerite from *Faust* by Charles Gounod (1818-1893); Cleopatra from *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* by George Frideric Handel (1685-1759); Adele from *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss II (1825-1899); Olympia from *Les contes D'Hoffmann* by Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880), and Lucia from *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Gaetano Donizetti. Up to this point in my directed studies I had stayed on track with my original plan, but my third and final study was going to change all that.

In preparation for my last directed study I spent time tracking down scores and original texts concerning each of the operas I would be researching. I had a wide range of information to explore including plays, novels, and historical resources. I spent time reading Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749-1832) *Faust*, a compilation of Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffman's (1776-1822) tales, Sir Walter Scott's (1771-1832) *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and I reread Canto XXX of Dante Alighieri's (ca. 1265-1321) *Inferno* that dealt with the story of *Gianni Schicchi*. I also began researching Cleopatra, Elizabeth Doe-Tabor, the silver standard crisis, and Masonic practices in hopes of being fully prepared for my directed study. As the semester progressed I wrote a character analysis on each role, and I started a preliminary musical analysis of each of the *arias* that I intended to learn and perform during my thesis lecture recital. As the sheer

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magnitude of what I was trying to accomplish struck me, Dr. Garrett began to hint that maybe I was being a bit too ambitious with my thesis idea. At first I protested her opinion, which I considered a lack of faith in my abilities, but slowly I began to see her reasoning. I finally reached the conclusion that my current thesis was overambitious, but Dr. Garrett came up with a solution. She had noticed my blatant passion for *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and suggested that instead of scrapping my thesis idea entirely I should just narrow it down to the role of Lucia. I jumped at the idea immediately and I whole-heartedly threw myself into the task of learning, analyzing, and performing what is considered to be one of the greatest mad scenes in all of opera.

## Why Lucia

Even though one understands the logical process that was involved in leading me to my thesis idea, he or she may not understand why I feel such a strong connection to Lucia. People might ask "Why Lucia? Why not Olympia? That's a fun role!" "What about Cleopatra? Rachel loves Egyptology!" Both of those statements are true, but of all the roles I studied for my thesis, none stayed with me like the tragic Lucia. This is easy to explain. The first thing to keep in mind is the nature of the story itself. *Lucia di Lammermoor* is based on Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*, which in turn is based on a true story. History and literature are two of my favorite things to study, so the source text for *Lucia* immediately grabbed my attention. Secondly, *Lucia* is filled with superstition and unknown forces that drive the story to its tragic conclusion. Both the superstition of the culture and this unforgiving sense of fate stir my imagination. Another rousing aspect of the opera is the music itself. Donizetti's score creates moments that range the entirety of the emotional spectrum. The love duet between Lucia

and Edgardo lifts the audience with moments of sheer ecstasy. Moments of somber foreshadowing pervade the opera, and can best be seen in the confrontation that takes place between Lucia and her brother Enrico. The most impressive example of Donizetti's mastery of music and its manipulative power can be seen in Lucia's dramatic emotional shifts of insanity during the Mad Scene. The thematic material of the *libretto* also gave me a strong connection to the story. As a young woman of fairly strong will I was immediately caught by the tale of a naïve young woman who, due to her place in society, had an obligation to fulfill her brother's cruel will despite her own desires. The final reason I chose Lucia and her Mad Scene was due to her insanity. Ever since I read William Shakespeare's (ca. 1564-1616) *Hamlet*, I have had a fascination with characters who lose control of their sanity. I am not sure what this says about me as a person, but I believe that portraying a character who descends into madness is one of the most fascinating and difficult challenges a performer can face. Giving a truthful and believable performance of a young bride who has murdered her husband is no easy task, and it is what ultimately drove me to choose Lucia's Mad Scene to study and perform for my thesis. Now that the preliminary work is out of the way, let the descent into madness begin.

# CHAPTER 2

## FROM FACT TO FICTION

### The Transformation of Janet Dalrymple into Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*

"Of all the murders I ever committed in that way, and few men had been guilty of more, there is none that went so much to my heart as the poor Bride of Lammermoor; but it could not be helped- it is all true."[1] This is the confession that Sir Walter Scott made to his friend, Don Luigi Santa Croce, concerning the fate of his heroine in the novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Scott's novel would inspire eight operatic adaptations, with the most successful being Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.[2] Donizetti's opera is well known in the operatic world for its famous "Mad Scene," which is approximately seventeen minutes in length and consists of the soprano singing an extensive amount of *coloratura*, or highly ornamented, passages. Even those who have not seen or heard of *Lucia di Lammermoor* may still be familiar with the "Mad Scene" due to its having been featured in the science fiction film *The Fifth Element*, and other popular culture appearances. The viewers of Donizetti's day would have been at least familiar with Scott's novel, even if they had not actually read it. Unfortunately, audiences today are not aware of the novel on which Donizetti and Salvadore Cammarano (1801-1852) based their *libretto*. Even fewer know that Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* was based on a series of true events

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[1] John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Volume Five* (Houghton, Mifflin and co., 1901), 419.

[2] Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture 1830-1980* (Pantheon Books, 1985), 14.

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that occurred in the seventeenth century.[3] This sad lack of knowledge is not limited to *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Many operas suffer the same fate.

Every opera *libretto* is based on something. Whether it is a play, myth, novel, poem, short story, secret society, or a historical event, every composer and *librettist* is influenced by something. While it would be helpful for opera audiences to be educated on the shows that they attend, performers who know the history of the *libretto* often perform their role with more psychological depth than those who have not performed such research. As professional artists, opera singers need to know the musical score of the opera in which they are performing both technically and dramatically. This means that their knowledge should not be limited to the pitches and rhythms they sing, but also the dramatic purposes of those elements. Truly understanding a composer's intent behind their text setting often involves knowing the story behind the *libretto*. The history and evolution of the story that a composer sets are important in understanding a character's origin, personality, and ambitions. Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* is a wonderful case study of how an opera *libretto* can evolve from a true historical event and what is often sacrificed in the process to make the evolution possible.

Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* was actually based on a true story that had been told to him by his mother and great-aunt.[4] The story was of Janet Dalrymple and her doomed marriage to David Dunbar of Baldoon. Janet was the daughter of a Scottish lawyer, James Dalrymple, and his strong-willed wife, Dame Margaret Ross. Janet had allegedly secretly pledged herself to Lord Rutherford by breaking a piece of gold with him. The conflict arose when David Dunbar, who happened to be the nephew of Lord Rutherford, sought Janet's hand in

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[3] Robert M. Polhemus, *Erotic Faith: Being in Love from Jane Austen to D.H. Lawrence* (The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 55.

[4] Fiona Robertson, introduction to *The Bride of Lammermoor* (Oxford University Press, 1991), vii.

marriage. Janet opposed the marriage to Dunbar and was forced to confess her secret engagement with Rutherford to her parents. Janet's parents did not consider Lord Rutherford to be a suitable match for her, and pressured her to break her pledge and marry Dunbar. When news of this reached Lord Rutherford, he wrote to Janet's parents saying that Janet was pledged to him and therefore could not marry Dunbar. Dame Margaret Ross replied to his letter stating that Janet had retracted her vow because it had not been sanctioned by her parents. Not willing to take no for an answer, Lord Rutherford requested an interview with Janet to hear the disavowal from her own mouth. Her mother agreed to the interview and made sure that she was present during the exchange. Though the interview was meant to be between Janet and Rutherford, it was Dame Margaret Ross who took control. She argued that Janet was not bound to her pledge because, according to Levitical law, parents must have knowledge of any such pledge and provide their approval for it to be valid. Lord Rutherford declared that he wanted Janet to renounce her pledge without her mother speaking on her behalf. Janet, who was overwhelmed by the situation, caved in to her mother's wishes and returned her half of the piece of gold that was the symbol of her pledge to Rutherford. Lord Rutherford left the apartment and went abroad, never to see Janet again.

The wedding arrangements between David Dunbar of Baldoon and Janet Dalrymple proceeded, and on August 12, 1669, they were married. The wedding celebration was short lived because that night, after the bride and her bridegroom had retired to the bridal chamber, there was a terrible scream. When the guests reached the chamber, they discovered Janet curled up in the fireplace wearing only her nightgown, which was covered in blood. They discovered Dunbar lying on the floor critically wounded. The only audible words Janet spoke were "take up your bonny bridegroom." Dunbar would survive his wounds, but Janet passed away on the twelfth of

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September, 1669, never having recovered her sanity.[5] It has been recorded that the window to the bridal chamber was open when the guests entered. This led to the suspicion that Lord Rutherford had concealed himself inside the chamber and had attacked Dunbar when the bride and groom entered the room.[6] What really took place that evening will never be known because Dunbar, for reasons unknown, took the secret of what occurred to his grave.[7]

Sir Walter Scott's novel holds closely to the account of Janet's story that his mother and great-aunt had told him. There are, however, some notable differences between the historical event and *The Bride of Lammermoor*. The first of these differences is the time period. The actual case of Janet Dalrymple took place in the seventeenth century, but Scott set his novel at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[8] The names of people and places involved in the story were altered. For example, Janet Dalrymple became Lucy Ashton, Lord Rutherford became Lord Edgar Ravenswood, and David Dunbar became Lord Bucklaw. For the purpose of his novel, Scott also added new characters into the story. These include Caleb Balderstone, blind Alice, Norman, Craigengelt, and the three witches. Scott also edited the story by adding or altering events from his mother's version of the story. Among the added subplots are the first meeting of Lucy and Edgar, the legend of the Mermaiden's Well, the evening that Lucy and Lord Ashton spent in Wolf's Craig with Lord Ravenswood, and the death of blind Alice. The most important alteration in events is the death of Lord Ravenswood. Instead of leaving the country, Lord Ravenswood dies in the Kelpie's flow on his way to duel Lucy's elder brother, Sholto Ashton.

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[5] Sir Walter Scott, *The Bride of Lammermoor* (Oxford University Press, 1991), 1-7.

[6] Richard Edgcumbe, *The Diary of Frances Lady Shelley* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 117.

[7] Virginia Brackett and Victoria Gaydosik, *The Facts on File Companion to the British Novel* (Virginia Brackett, 2006), 44.

[8] Polhemus, 55.

*The Bride of Lammermoor* is also steeped in superstition. The only event in the true story that seems superstitious are the final words that Lord Rutherford spoke to Janet after she returned her half of the golden coin. "For you, madam, you will be a world's wonder." This phrase implies impending calamity in Scottish folklore.[9] Rutherford's statement was modified by Scott for inclusion in the novel. Other elements of superstition and Scottish culture can be found throughout *The Bride of Lammermoor*. One good example of the presence of the supernatural in *The Bride of Lammermoor* is Lord Ravenswood's encounter with blind Alice's ghost at the Mermaiden's Well immediately following her death. Scott's addition of the three hags, also referred to as the three witches, is one example of Scott's use of common Scottish themes. They have often been compared to the three witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.[10] The importance of Scottish folklore and family curses also plays an important role in the novel. The tale of the Mermaiden's Well and its fatal connection to the Ravenswood family is a good example of how Scott uses folklore and family curses as important devices that add to the impending doom of the lovers. While Scott's use of the supernatural and Scottish heritage is evident in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, they are two aspects that were sacrificed in creating the *libretto* for *Lucia di Lammermoor*.[11]

Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* premiered on September 26, 1835. It was a successful premier, and the role of Lucia has remained a staple role in the repertory for any soprano possessing the *coloratura* abilities to perform the part.[12] To transform Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* into an opera *libretto*, Donizetti and his *librettist* Salvadore Cammarano were

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[9] Scott, 3.

[10] John Lauber, *Sir Walter Scott* (G.K. Hall & co., 1989), 87.

[11] Lauber, 88.

[12] Stanley Sadie, *The Grove book of Operas: Second Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 356.

forced to condense both the novel's events and characters.[13]  Some characters that were cut from the story entirely were Lord Ravenswood's loyal servant Caleb Balderstone, the three witches, Bucklaw's companion Craigengelt, and Scott's lead antagonist Lady Ashton.  There are several other characters that are not taken completely out of the story, but are so different from their original personalities that it is difficult to see their connection between the novel and the opera. Three characters that fall into this category are Norman, Ailsie Gourlay, and Reverend Bide-the-Bent.  While some characters were omitted or transformed in the opera, Lucy's father and older brother are fused into a single character, Enrico Ashton.  Enrico has the status of Lord Ashton, but the passionate and vengeful personality of Sholto Ashton.  The final important change in the characters is their names.  Scott initially changed the historical names, such as Janet and Lord Rutherford, for the purpose of his novel.  When the opera *libretto* was created, the characters' names were transformed again into Italian names.  For example, Lucy is Lucia and Edgar is Edgardo, and Reverend Bide-the-Bent is Raimondo Bidebent.

Although the plot line of the opera is similar to Scott's novel, it is a condensed version. The curtain opens on a chorus of Enrico Ashton's retainers who have been searching for an intruder on the grounds of the Ravenswood Castle.  The chorus is lead by Normanno who is a huntsman and a loyal retainer of Enrico Ashton.  This is where we see the first major difference between the novel and the opera.  Norman in *The Bride of Lammermoor* is a retainer on the Ravenswood estate, but he is still loyal to the Ravenswood family, not the Ashton family.  The huntsmen depart to search for the intruder without Normanno, Enrico, and Raimondo Bidebent. In the following scene we learn that the political fortunes of Enrico Ashton are beginning to wane, and that the only way for him to save himself is for his sister Lucia to marry Lord Arturo

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[13] Lauber, 88.

Bucklaw. Raimondo insists that Lucia cannot yet marry for she is still grieving the death of her mother. Normanno finds Raimondo's excuse amusing, claiming that Lucia has indeed fallen in love with Edgardo Ravenswood, Enrico's sworn enemy, after Edgardo saved her from a rampaging bull. The first meeting of Edgardo and Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor* is similar to Lucy and Edgar's meeting in *The Bride of Lammermoor*. The main difference is that in Scott's novel, Edgar saves both Lucy and Lord Ashton from the raging bull. The huntsmen return with the news that Edgardo is indeed on the grounds, and Enrico becomes furious.

Enrico sings a passionate rage *aria*, in which he swears to destroy Edgardo, ending the first scene of Act I. The second scene of Act I takes place at a fountain on the castle grounds. This fountain is the parallel of the Mermaiden's Well in *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Lucia is waiting at the fountain for Edgardo and is accompanied by her companion Alisa. Alisa is based on Ailsie Gourlay from the novel, but beyond the similarity in the names, there is no real connection between the two characters. Ailsie Gourlay is one of the three "witches" in *The Bride of Lammermoor* whom Lady Ashton hires to act as Lucy's sick nurse, and who twists Lucy's mind with stories of death and the supernatural. In the opera, Alisa is simply Lucia's loyal companion. Lucia sings the *aria* "Regnava nel silenzio" to Alisa as they wait for Edgardo's arrival. In the *aria*, Lucia recounts the legend of a Lord of Ravenswood who murdered his lover at the fountain and of how Lucia has actually seen the dead maid's ghost beckoning to her. The legend of the Ravenswood Lord and his lover comes from *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and is why the Mermaiden's Well is considered a fatal spot for the Ravenswood family.[14] Edgardo arrives at the fountain and tells Lucia that he is going to France for political reasons and will be gone for an unknown amount of time. Lord Ravenswood also goes to France in the novel, but the novel is more descriptive of the political motivation behind this decision.

[14] Scott, 57-59.

Though *The Bride of Lammermoor* goes into more detail concerning this topic, both the opera and novel hold true to the historical situation of Lord Rutherford. Lord Rutherford was in a tough financial and political situation, which is one of the main reasons Janet's family found him to be unsuitable for her to marry.[15] Edgardo tells Lucia that before he leaves for France he wants to make peace with her brother Enrico despite the vow he made to avenge his father, whom Enrico ruined politically and financially. As a sign of peace, Edgardo will ask Enrico for Lucia's hand in marriage. Lucia begs Edgardo not to say anything to Enrico because she knows the hatred her brother has for Edgardo. Edgardo decides that while they cannot be married by a priest yet, they can be married to each other before God. By the fountain he and Lucia exchange rings and say their goodbyes before Edgardo leaves for France.

The opening scene of Act II takes place inside the castle in Enrico's apartments. Normanno and he are discussing Lucia and Edgardo's love letters that have been intercepted. In order to convince Lucia to marry Lord Arturo Bucklaw, Normanno and Enrico forge a letter from Edgardo telling Lucia that he has fallen in love with a girl in France and has no desire to marry her anymore. Normanno leaves to welcome Lord Bucklaw, who is already arriving at the estate, and Lucia enters Enrico's apartments. Enrico claims that he wants Lucia to marry Lord Bucklaw because it is his familial duty to have her married to a suitable man. Lucia still refuses to marry him, protesting that she considers herself married to Edgardo. Enrico is then forced to show her the forged letter. Despite her shock, Lucia still claims to love Edgardo and fatefully asserts that she would rather die than marry anyone else. Only when Raimondo convinces Lucia that her "marriage" was not valid in God's eyes, and that marrying Arturo would save her brother, does she half-heartedly consent to the marriage. Enrico returns to the manor with the

[15] Scott, 2.

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bridegroom so the marriage contract can be signed. The sullen and indifferent manner in which Lucia signs the wedding contract is also seen in *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Just as soon as Lucia has signed the wedding contract, Edgardo crashes onto the scene protesting that Lucia is his bride. His sudden entrance throws Lucia into shock and the rest of the wedding party into fury. He demands Lucia to admit whether or not she signed the contract. When she responds that she did, he gives her back her ring and demands that she return his. She does so half-knowingly, and he throws it to the ground in a rage and stomps on it. Edgardo is then chased off the premises by Enrico and the wedding guests, bringing a close to Act II of the opera.

The third and final Act of *Lucia di Lammermoor* begins with a scene between Edgardo and Enrico that is sometimes cut from the opera. In the scene, Enrico challenges Edgardo to a duel for disrupting the signing of the wedding contract. In the novel Lucy's brother, Sholto, does challenge Lord Ravenswood, but not until after Lucy's funeral. Enrico agrees to the duel, and it is decided that the rivals will meet at the tomb of the Ravenswood's to duel at dawn. The scene then shifts to the wedding celebration held at the Ravenswood castle. The chorus of wedding guests are singing and dancing joyfully when Raimondo enters with the dreadful news that Lucia has gone insane and killed her bridegroom. The room goes silent as Lucia enters in her nightgown, stained with blood. This is where her famous "Mad Scene" occurs. It goes through different stages of her lunacy, and culminates with her final descent into complete unconsciousness. The final scene of the opera opens with Edgardo awaiting the arrival of Enrico for their duel. Instead of Enrico though, a group of lamenting men appear. When Edgardo inquires for whom they are mourning, they reply that they are mourning for Lucia who has gone insane. They also inform him that with her dying breath she has called out for him. Realizing that he has wrongly accused Lucia of infidelity, Edgardo tries to rush to the castle to see her

before she dies. He is stopped, however, by Raimondo who reports that Lucia is already dead. Unlike the novel, Edgardo stabs himself so that he may be reunited with Lucia in heaven.

Besides a few alterations, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* are closely related. However, it must be pointed out that Lord Ravenswood is the focal character in Sir Walter Scott's novel while Lucia is the key role in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The *Bride of Lammermoor* centers more around Ravenswood and his struggles, while *Lucia di Lammermoor* focuses on Lucia's role in the tragedy. This shift in focus is made extremely clear during Lucia's "Mad Scene." In the novel, Lucy is only given one coherent line before her death "So, you have ta'en up your bonny bridegroom?"[16] In the opera Lucia receives an entire scene dedicated to her insanity. The scene has three parts to it, and it uses various musical techniques to portray Lucia's madness. The beginning section, "Il Dolce Suono [...]", is a *recitative* and *aria*. This is followed by a *recitative* between Lucia, Enrico, and Raimondo. The third and final section of the scene consists of Lucia singing yet another *aria* while the chorus and other principals comment on the sad sight.

One way that Lucia's insanity is portrayed is through the orchestration. The opening flute solo, originally played by the glass harmonica, symbolizes her unstable mind and reappears throughout the *aria*. The orchestra also quotes a distorted version of one of the motifs from the love duet between Edgardo and Lucia from Act I Scene II. Another important musical device used to show her lunacy is the *cadenza* for voice and flute at the end of the first section of the scene. During the *cadenza* Lucia sings, and the flute plays back to her, giving the audience the impression that she is hearing voices. The shifting *tempi* found throughout the scene also allude to the extreme emotional swings that Lucia experiences during her madness.

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[16] Scott, 338.

Lucia's lyrics are equally as important as the music in setting the context of the Mad Scene. At the beginning of the scene Lucia believes that she is at the fountain waiting for Edgardo so they can be married, when they are suddenly split apart by the ghost of the maiden that Edgardo's ancestor killed. She also begins to mistake people's identities. When her brother Enrico enters, she mistakes him for Edgardo, and she begs him to forgive her for signing the marriage contract because her brother made her do so. She also mentions how Edgardo had stepped on the ring that symbolized their love.

Subtle moments like these in the *libretto* can be completely overlooked by a singer if they are not extremely familiar with the show. Even if a singer can catch all the references in this challenging scene, they may not realize their full importance if they do not understand their historic significance. It is for this reason that a singer needs to be aware of the origins of the operas they perform. If they do not, they are likely to miss the true importance of the story. In the case of Lucia, for her descent into madness to seem founded, the actress must be able to make every reference count. If she fails to do this, then the *coloratura* of the role will have no soul or true motivation. To recreate a character's soul takes a lot of time and effort. The more information a performer can obtain regarding a character, the easier it is to accomplish this critical task. In the end, the process is well worth it for both the performer and the audience.

# CHAPTER 3

## AT ODDS WITH CIRCUMSTANCE

### Summary of the Mad Scene

The climax of *Lucia di Lammermoor* is Lucia's Mad Scene. The scene takes place during Scene II of Act III. The wedding guests of Arturo and Lucia are gathered at the Ravenswood estate celebrating their union, but the banquet is cut tragically short. Raimondo enters the great hall to announce that in a fit of madness Lucia has killed Arturo. He explains that after hearing a cry from Lucia and Arturo's wedding chamber, he rushed in to see Arturo lying dead on the floor and Lucia standing over his body clutching a bloody knife and asking for her bridegroom. The crowd listens to his tale in horror until Lucia appears on the scene. It is immediately apparent to the guests that Lucia has slipped beyond reason as she hallucinates about the Ravenswood ghost, the fountain, and being married to Edgardo. Enrico, Lucia's brother, crashes onto the scene having just returned from challenging Edgardo to a duel. He hastily demands to know if the rumor that Lucia has killed Arturo is true. Raimondo acknowledges that it is, and Enrico turns his rage onto Lucia without realizing the emotional state she is in. Lucia mistakes Enrico for Edgardo, and begins begging her bewildered brother to forgive her for signing the marriage contract. Enrico laments his sister's fate while Raimondo places the blame for Lucia's state of mind on Enrico. Lucia reaches the height of her hysteria, and sensing her approaching death, swears that heaven will mean nothing to her until Edgardo

has joined her there. As the scene comes to a close, Lucia promises that her spirit will stay near Edgardo once she has passed, and she sinks into unconsciousness never to regain her sanity.

## Word-for-Word Translation

One of the first things voice students are taught is the importance of doing a word-for-word translation of repertoire in foreign languages. Many art song and opera *aria* anthologies come with poetic translations either at the beginning of the piece or printed under the original text. While these poetic translations are helpful, they are often inaccurate. Studying in Italy this summer with the *Musica Nelle Marche* program personally reaffirmed how important it is to take the time for a word-for-word translation. Poetic texts can give you a general feel for the piece and it's meaning, but a dedicated artist strives for more than a feeling for a piece. Instead, singers should try to invest themselves into their foreign pieces as deeply as possible by putting in the effort of translating each individual word. For example, the G. Schirmer opera anthology for *coloratura* sopranos contains a poetic translation of the *aria* sections of the Mad Scene.[17] The poetic translation for the final section of the scene "spargi d'amaro pianto il mio terrestre velo, mentre lassù nel cielo io pregherò per te" is translated as "sprinkle my earthly veil with bitter weeping, while in heaven above I will pray for you." This translation is artistic, but now compare it to the literal word-for-word translation of the same phrase. "You shed bitter tears on my earthly veil, while there in heaven I will pray for you." Both the poetic translation and my word-for-word are similar, but there are two important differences. The first is that the word-for-word translation stays truer to the *libretto's* meaning. In the Schirmer anthology the poetic translation uses the phrase "in heaven above [...]," but the Italian word for above, *sopra*, is nowhere to be found in the original text. It appears that the use of the word "above" for the

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[17] Robert L. Larsen and Martha Gerhart, *Coloratura Arias for Soprano* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 2002), 10.

poetic translation was simply an embellishment added by the editors to make the sentence flow better in English. The Schirmer sentence flows well, but the purpose of translating a foreign text should be to have a full comprehension of what you are singing. The second important advantage I see in using a word-for-word translation is discovering the dramatic intention of the Italian text. For example, the Italian word *spargi* is actually the second person singular conjugation of the verb *spargere*. The Schirmer anthology translates this word as "sprinkle", but the actual meaning of this verb is to "scatter, spill, shed, or spread". Each of these verbs has a much stronger emotional pull than "sprinkle," but I chose to use the word "shed" because the idea of shedding tears held a strong dramatic meaning in my mind. While it is possible that the editors of the Schirmer anthology might have been attempting to show poetic symbolism between sprinkling tears on Lucia's veil and baptism, there is no foundation for that idea in the original Italian text. The following translation is a word-for-word translation of Lucia's Mad Scene that I wrote. Keep in mind that I am only human and therefore there may be some mistakes due to the use of antique Italian words that are now obsolete and cannot be found in modern Italian-English dictionaries.

Lucia:
Il dolce suono mi colpì di sua voce.
Ah, quella voce m'è qui nel cor discesa.
Edgardo, io ti son resa,
Edgardo, ah, Edgardo mio,
sì, ti son resa:
fuggita io son da tuoi nemici.
Un gelo mi serpeggia nel sen!
Trema ogni fibra, vacilla il piè!
Presso la fonte meco t'assidi alquanto,
sì, presso la fonte meco t'assidi!

Ohimè! Sorge il tremendo fantasma
e ne separa!
Ohimè! Ohimè! Edgardo! Edgardo! Ah!
Il fantasma, ne separa!
Qui ricovriamo, Edgardo,
a piè dell'ara.

Lucy:
The sweet sound of your voice struck me.
Ah, that voice here in my heart descends.
Edgar, I to you surrender,
Edgar, Ah, Edgar mine,
yes, to you I surrender:
I have fled your enemies.
A wind chills my breast!
Every fiber trembles, my feet are unsteady!
Sit with me near the fountain for a while,
yes, near the fountain with me sit!

Alas! The terrible ghost arises
and it separates us!
Alas! Alas! Edgar! Edgar! Ah!
The ghost, it separates us!
Here take shelter, Edgar,
at the foot of the alter.

Sparsa è di rose!
Un'armonia celeste, di', non ascolti?
Ah! L'inno suona di nozze!
Ah! L'inno di nozze!
Il rito per noi s'appresta!
Oh me felice!
Edgardo! Ah me felice!
Oh gioia che si sente, e non si dice!

Ardon gl'incensi,
splendon le sacre faci,
splendon intorno.
Ecco il ministro!
Porgimi la destra!
Oh lieto giorno!
Alfin son tua, alfin sei mio,
a me ti dona un Dio.
Ogni piacer più grato,
sì, ogni piacere mi fia con te diviso,
con te!
Del ciel clemente un riso
la vita a noi sarà!

Raimondo:
S'avanza Enrico!

Enrico:
Ditemi: vera è l'atroce scena?

Raimondo:
Vera, pur troppo!

Enrico:
Ah perfida! Ne avrai condegna pena!

Raimondo:
T'arresta! Oh ciel! Non vedi lo stato suo?

Lucia:
Che chiedi?

Enrico:
Oh, qual pallor!

Raimondo:
Ha la ragion smarrita.

Enrico:
Gran Dio!

Raimondo:
Tremare, o barbaro, tu dei per la sua vita.

Scattered are the roses!
Do you not hear the celestial harmony?
The wedding hymn plays!
Ah! The wedding hymn!
The rite for us it prepares!
Oh I am happy!
Edgardo! Ah my happiness!
Oh the joy that I feel but of which I don't speak!

The incense is burning,
the sacred torches are shining,
shining all around.
Here comes the minister!
Give me your hand!
Oh happy day!
At last I am yours, at last you are mine,
God gives you to me.
Everything pleasing and gracious,
yes, everything pleasing and gracious, I share with
you!
Life for us will be laughter
from lenient Heaven!

Raymond:
Henry approaches!

Henry:
Tell me: is the terrible scene true?

Raymond:
It's too true.

Henry:
Ah perfidious girl! You deserve sorrow!

Raymond:
Stop! Oh Heaven! Can't you see her state?

Lucy:
Who calls?

Henry:
Oh, what paleness!

Raymond:
She has lost her reason.

Henry:
Great God!

Raymond:
Tremble, o barbarian, you caused this for her life.

Lucia:
Ah me misera!
Non mi guardar sì fiero, segnai quel foglio, è vero, sì
è vero.
Nell'ira sua terribile calpesta, oh Dio, l'anello!
Mi maledice! Ah! Vittima fui d'un crudel fratello:
ma ognor, t'amai, ognora, Edgardo, sì, ognor, t'amai,
ah!
E t'amo ancor!

Enrico e Raimondo:
Ah! Di lei, Signor, pietà!

Lucia:
Chi mi nomasti? Arturo!
Tu nomasti. Arturo!
Ah! Non fuggir! Ah, per pietà!
No, non fuggir! Ah perdon!

Enrico e Raimondo:
Infelice! Ah pietà, Signor, pietà!

Raimondo:
Qual notte di terror!

Enrico:
Lucia! Lucia! Gran Dio! Ah Lucia!

Lucia:
Ah! No, non fuggir, Edgardo!

Spargi d'amaro pianto
il mio terrestre velo,
mentre lassù nel cielo io pregherò per te.
Al giunger tuo soltanto
fia bello il ciel per me! Ah sì, per me.

Enrico:
Ah, vita d'amaro,
d'amaro pianto serba il rimorso a me.
Sì, sì, a me.

Raimondo:
Ah, più raffrenare il pianto
no, no, possibile non è.

Lucia:
Ah ch'io spiri accanto a te,
appresso a te!
Ah!

Lucy:
Ah I'm miserable!
See I am not proud of myself, I signed the page, it's
true, yes it's true.
In his terrible fury he tramples on, oh God, the ring!
I curse! Ah! I was a victim of a cruel brother:
but I'll always love you, always, Edgar, yes, always,
I'll love you, ah!
And I Love you still!

Henry and Raymond:
Ah! Of her, Lord, have pity!

Lucy:
Whom did you chose for me? Arthur!
Whom did you chose for you. Arthur!
Ah! Don't run away! Ah, have pity!
No, don't run away! Ah forgive me!

Henry and Raymond:
Sad girl! Ah have pity, Lord, have pity!

Raymond:
What a night of terror!

Henry:
Lucy! Lucy! Great God! Ah Lucy!

Lucy:
Ah! No, don't leave Edgar!

You shed bitter tears
on my earthly veil,
while there in Heaven I will pray for you.
Only when you are there will
the heavens be beautiful for me. Ah yes, for me.

Henry:
Ah, the bitter life,
bitter tears to keep the remorse to me.
Yes, yes, to me.

Raymond:
Ah, to restrain more tears
no, no, it is possible no more.

Lucy:
Ah I forswore my spirit to be by your side,
close to you!
Ah!

## Musical and Dramatic Analysis of the Scene

Emotions can often be manipulated by sound. During the most romantic scene in a movie the orchestra might swell along an upward ascending scale, while during an important fight sequence during a war-based film the brass and percussion might take over. The use of music to manipulate an audience's emotions and opinions of events or characters has been practiced long before the cinematic score came into existence. Opera composers chose musical elements for their operatic scores for the same purposes. The music in opera can represent the feelings and thoughts of the characters, the mood of the scene, or even objects and ideas. Richard Wagner (1813-1883) is often credited with the most extensive use of music to portray ideas and specific events through his *leitmotifs*, but he was hardly the first composer to utilize music in such a manner. The music found in *Lucia di Lammermoor* is highly symbolic, and Lucia's Mad Scene is an important example of this. Donizetti uses musical elements such as keys, tempos, musical themes, and text painting for dramatic purposes throughout the scene.

The notion that specific pitches can influence emotions is an idea that has existed since the time of the Ancient Greeks. The use of modes in Ancient Greek society was thought not only to express specific emotions, but was used to influence the hearer's ethics as well.[18] Not much has changed since the time of the ancient Greeks. As a society, our ears have been trained to associate major and minor keys with specific emotions. For example, a minor key indicates that a song is sad while a major key indicates that a song is happy. Commonly held associations between key signatures and emotions may apply to rational thinkers, but what about people who are irrational? Better yet, what associations between tonality and feelings do people who have stepped past irrationality into insanity make? Donizetti explores this idea in Lucia's Mad Scene.

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[18] David Binning Monro, *The Modes of Ancient Greek Music* (Clarendon Press, 1894), pg. 1.

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He begins the scene in the key of c, which makes logical sense due to the morbid topic. Surprisingly, Donizetti does not linger in the key of c for long. By m. 22 the piece modulates to B-flat. This sudden shift into a major key coincides with Lucia's rising excitement. The rest of the first *aria* spends its time fluttering between A-flat, B-flat, and E-flat. These are all happy keys in which to place Lucia's music considering she has just stabbed and killed her bridegroom. In fact, the flute and voice *cadenza*, the *recitative*, and the final *aria* all sit almost entirely in major keys. A major I chord in the key of E-flat punctuates even Lucia's collapse into unconsciousness and death.

The question that must now be asked is why? Why would Donizetti set such a depressing scene to such happy tonalities? It is my opinion that Donizetti wanted to give the audience insight into Lucia's deranged mind. The moods reflected through the Mad Scene's music are those that Lucia feels, not the emotions that Donizetti wishes the audience to feel. On the contrary, we should be shocked and saddened by the themes of death and impending doom that the Mad Scene contains. Instead of directly setting the scene in minor keys to elicit sadness and shock from the audience, Donizetti chose to indirectly manipulate our emotions by using opposites. These major keys shock us, which is what I believe Donizetti wanted. I consider Donizetti's decision to stay mainly in major keys during the Mad Scene to be a tasteful one. It shows that Donizetti respected his audience enough that he did not feel the need to spoon-feed them by following the convention of treating keys as a direct indicator of how they should feel. I also find Donizetti's use of major keys to be more powerful than if he had decided to use solely minor ones because it adds to the off-keel nature of the scene. In my opinion there is not a more disturbing moment in the Mad Scene than the introduction to the second *aria*. The E-flat feeling

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is in stark contrast to Lucia's prediction of her own death, and it shows just how powerful playing off of opposites can be.

The *tempi*, or tempos, utilized during the Mad Scene are a second important musical method Donizetti employed to establish the various dramatic moods of the scene. There are 17 main *tempi* throughout the scene. I consider the main *tempi* to be those that Donizetti specifically notated in the score, like the *andante* at m. 1, or those that are commonly used by conductors of major opera houses. These main *tempi* do not take into consideration the ebb and flow within the phrases themselves. If I were to count every *ritardando*, *affretto*, *rallentando*, and *stringendo* that are marked or implied in the score, the total number of *tempi* would be much higher. Given the seemingly excessive number of *tempi* found in the Mad Scene, it is logical to assume that there is a reason behind these numerous shifts. Certainly Donizetti was trying to use the *tempi* for dramatic purposes. The shifts in tempo seem to always coincide with shifts in Lucia's thoughts. We know this because of her lyrics. Her lyrics seem to shift abruptly from one topic to another for no apparent reason to the audience. While these seemingly random progressions of thought make little sense to the audience, they make complete sense to Lucia. Lucia's shifts of thought and feelings are punctuated by shifts of tempo, meaning that Donizetti was trying to emphasize the rapid swings of emotion that Lucia is experiencing through the music.

While listening to *Lucia di Lammermoor*, I discovered three specific themes and sequences within the Mad Scene that were either found elsewhere in the opera or appeared continually throughout the Mad Scene. The first sequence, or series of repeated pitches that are changed either by starting on a altered pitch or rhythmically, is specific to the Mad Scene itself, and is first found on pg. 190, mm. 6-10 and reappears on pg. 190, mm. 20-22. While there are

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many sequences found in this scene, I consider this particular one to be noteworthy because it functions as the first solo the audience hears. In the original score the glass harmonica played the sequence, but the flute plays it in many modern productions. The unstable quality of the glass harmonica's tone paints an image of insanity through sound, and this sequence allows the audience to make an immediate connection between the sound of the glass harmonica and Lucia's madness. After this important sequence, we see two more important musical themes both of which originated in Act I. The first of these themes is found on pg. 192, mm.43-50. This melodic theme is taken from Edgardo and Lucia's *duetto* "Verranno a te sull'aure," and I have labeled it the "love theme." There are a couple of notable differences between the version of the "love theme" found in the *duetto* and the one in the Mad Scene. First off, it has been transposed from its original key of B-flat to A-flat. Secondly, there is the addition of chromatic pitches that invoke the same unstable feel that is found throughout the rest of the scene. This theme is also employed in many traditional versions of the voice and flute *cadenza*, including the one I will be utilizing. The second theme that has been borrowed from the first act of the opera is found on pg. 207, mm. 312-317 and repeated on pg. 211, mm. 376-381. I labeled this as a theme, but it is more of a loose adaptation of a passage found from Lucia's first *aria* "Regnava nel silenzio." These examples are merely three that I have focused on, but undoubtedly there are others to be found within the scene.

Text Painting is a common technique used by composers, and examples can be found as far back as the Renaissance. Text painting occurs when a lyric is set in a way that evokes the word itself or its implied emotions musically. There are examples of text painting throughout the entirety of the Mad Scene. On pg. 190, m 14 we see the word *discesa*, which is Italian for the word descend. This is an example of text painting because Donizetti has set the Italian word for

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descend on a descending phrase where a *portamento* is often added by the singer. Another example of the use of text painting to depict the meaning of the word is found on pg. 191 mm. 31-32. The sudden trembling that Lucia is referring to in this phrase is depicted musically by an *appoggiatura*. A version of text painting that is more commonly employed by Donizetti in the Mad Scene is the evocation of the emotions of the lyrics he is setting. Languid phrases at the beginning of the scene suggest Lucia's dream-like state. On the other hand, agitated rhythms sung on the syllable "ah" or "oh" insinuate in some cases her rising terror or in others, her escalating excitement. An example of this can be seen in the *cadenza* on pg. 194, m 110. The repetitions of words on ascending or descending lines are a third method in which Donizetti has employed text painting. By repeating Edgardo's name on an ascending line the singer is made aware that this is an important moment, and that careful attention should be given to it. Overall, Donizetti employs text painting to emphasize Lucia's deranged state of mind.

# CHAPTER 4

## INTO A MIND OF MADNESS

### Character Analysis

"Character study is an integral part of the preparation of a complete singer-actor."[19] Character analysis is an important tool that is used often in the world of straight theatre, but is many times forgotten about in the realm of opera. In my limited experience I have found the use of a character analysis to be both thought provoking and inspiring. In a way, opera singers have a great advantage over actors in straight theatre when it comes to sources from which they can draw inspiration. Not only do singers have the written *libretto* and source texts from which to draw information on our characters, but we are also given insight into our characters through the music that the composer gives us. The musical clues to Lucia's character have already been discussed in the previous chapter, so the focus of this character analysis will be based on what I drew from the *libretto*, Sir Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*, historical facts, and my own imagination. There is no one set way to create a character analysis. Many acting teachers have offered their own suggestions on how it can be done, but in the end I believe that it is up to the performer to chose what they believe is most important to know about the character. In his book, *Singing, Acting, and Movement in Opera*, Mark Ross Clark has created several lists of questions that deal directly with the character and the environment of the scene. It is upon these lists that I based my initial character analysis for my directed study. The following character

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[19] Mark Ross Clark, *Singing, Acting, and Movement in Opera* (Indiana University Press, 2002), 24.

analysis is an expanded version of the one I used for my directed study that consists of questions

I have gleaned from acting classes at Ouachita, questions from Mark Clark's book, and questions

that I have deemed important.

## Lucia from Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*

### The Opera's Origin:
The *libretto* by Salvadore Cammarano is based on Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Scott's novel is based on the true story of Janet Dalrymple.

### The Opera's Setting:
Time Period: The reign of William and Mary (late $17^{th}$ century).
Location: Lammermuir (Lammermoor) Hills, Scotland: the grounds and halls of the Ravenswood estate and the tomb of the Ravenswood's.

### General Observations about the Character:
Name: Lucia Ashton
Age: 17 (pg. 31 of Sir Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*)
Place of Birth: Lammermuir (Lammermoor) Hills of Scotland
Home: Ravenswood Castle in the Lammermuir (Lammermoor) Hills of Scotland
Economic/Social Level: A fallen noble family.
Education Level: Not formally educated.

### Physical Characteristics:
Height: 5'4"
Build: Slender and a bit fragile.
Hair and Eye Color: Reddish-gold hair and light blue, grey, or green eyes.
Skin Tone and Quality: In the first act she is slightly pale. In the second and third acts she is extremely pale, and her hands feel like ice.
Race/Nationality: Scottish.
Physical Condition/Health/Vitality: Physically she is young and healthy in the first act, but mentally she is slightly unstable.
General Kinesthetic Description: Graceful at first, then mopy.

### Personal Attire:
Lucia's personal attire is of a faded glory. Her family used to have a large estate, but it has begun to deteriorate. Her clothes would be beautiful, but worn. She would also probably still have some family jewels, but probably not many. She would wear a large tartan in the first act, and probably a smaller one in the second act. During the wedding scene she would wear a Scottish wedding gown, and in the final scene she would be in her dressing gown.

## Important Objects:

Seen by Audience During the Show: A ring, a letter, and a dagger.

Not Seen by the Audience: Possibly a portrait of her deceased parents in a locket; love letters from Edgardo.

## Personality Traits:

Leader, Follower, Free Spirit, etc.: Follower
Temperament: Does not really have a temper until the mad scene. She is mild and meek.
General Demeanor: Nervous, anxious, and fearful.
Possible Physical Manifestations of General Demeanor: Pacing, clasping her hands, nervous fidgeting.
Other Physical Habits: Biting her lip or playing with her hair and/or her clothing a lot.

## The Character's Personal Life:

Father: Deceased.
Mother: Recently Deceased.
Siblings: One brother, Enrico Ashton.
Social/Economic/Environment of the Character's Childhood: A noble family with some economic power that is beginning to decline.
Marital Status: Engaged/later married to Lord Arturo Bucklaw.
Lover: Edgardo Ravenswood
Children: None
Character's Closest Friend: Alisa
Religion: Calvinist
Work Experience: None, Enrico and Lucia live off of what is left of their family estate.

## Relationships to Other Characters:

Enrico: Is Lucia's brother. They are a bit estranged even though he is technically taking care of her. He forces Lucia to marry Arturo to save himself politically.

Edgardo: Saved Lucia from a wild bull, and they fell madly in love. They secretly meet almost every morning. The tricky part is that Edgardo is Enrico's sworn enemy.

Arturo: Is the groom that Enrico forces Lucia to marry. Lucia kills him on their wedding night after going insane.

Raimondo Bidebent: Is a Calvinist preacher whom Lucia sees as a mentor. He encourages Lucia to save her brother by marrying Arturo, but only because he believes that Edgardo does not love her anymore.

Alisa: Is Lucia's companion.

Normanno: Is the man who betrays Lucia's love affair with Edgardo to Enrico.

## A General Breakdown of the Scenes the Character Appears in:

### Act I, Scene II

Lucia is seen waiting for Edgardo to meet her by the fountain on her family's grounds. Alisa is with her, and Lucia tells her that she has seen the ghost of a Lammermoor girl that was killed by a Ravenswood long ago ("Regnava nel silenzio"). Alisa warns Lucia that she should give up her love for Edgardo, but Lucia refuses. Edgardo arrives and tells Lucia that he must go to France for political reasons. Edgardo says that he is going to try to end the feud with Enrico before he leaves, but Lucia urges him not to. They exchange rings in an unofficial wedding ceremony in which they promise their love to each other ("Verranno a te sull'aure").

### Act II, Scene I

Enrico and Normanno discuss the marriage between Arturo and Lucia that Enrico has arranged. They also discuss the letters from Edgardo to Lucia that they have intercepted, and the forged letter that Enrico will give to Lucia stating that Edgardo has met a lady in France whom he now wishes to marry. Normanno leaves to greet Arturo and Lucia enters mopily. Enrico gives her the forged letter and she is heartbroken. Enrico tells Lucia that she must marry Arturo to save him from his political enemies. Enrico leaves and Raimondo, believing that Edgardo does not love Lucia, tells Lucia that her "marriage" to Edgardo was not valid in the eyes of God because a minister did not perform it. He is only able to convince Lucia to marry Arturo by telling her that it is her duty to save her brother.

### Act II, Scene II

Arturo arrives to sign the marriage contract, and Enrico assures him that Lucia's upset behavior is due to the recent death of their mother. Arturo questions Enrico about Lucia's relationship with Edgardo, but Lucia's entrance lets Enrico off the hook. Almost as soon as Lucia signs the marriage contract Edgardo arrives. Edgardo and Enrico almost fight and Lucia, Arturo, Raimondo, and Alisa join them in a sextet ("Chi mi frena in tal momento"). Arturo and Enrico try to force Edgardo to leave, but Edgardo refuses to on the grounds that he and Lucia are married. Raimondo shows Edgardo the wedding contract that Lucia signed. Edgardo is furious when he discovers that she actually did sign it, and after taking off her ring, he tramples it. Edgardo is chased off after saying that he has nothing else to live for now that Lucia has betrayed his love, and Lucia is left completely desolate.

### Act III, Scene II

The wedding guests are celebrating Lucia's marriage when Raimondo appears and tells them that he has just seen Lucia standing over Arturo's dead body with a dagger in her hand. He explains that Lucia has gone insane and is now asking for her bridegroom. After Raimondo's *aria* ("Dalle stanze, ove Lucia [...]") describing what he saw, Lucia enters in a state of insanity wearing her blood-stained nightgown as the orchestra plays a twisted version of the melody found in her *aria* from the first act, "Regnava nel silenzio." Lucia hallucinates that she is at her and Edgardo's wedding ceremony by the fountain. Enrico enters furious at the news of Arturo's murder at the hands of Lucia. Before he can do anything Raimondo points out Lucia's mental state and Enrico is stunned. Lucia mistakes Enrico for Edgardo and tries to plea for his forgiveness. Raimondo accuses Enrico of causing this fate to befall Lucia, and Enrico is filled

with remorse. Lucia foresees her death and claims that heaven will not be beautiful until Edgardo joins her there.

**The Character's Range of Emotion:**
Submissive, loving, uneasy, fearful, nervous, worried, defiant, crazed, mournful, and depressed.

**The View of the Audience:**
*How does the audience view this character at the beginning of the show?*

Lucia is a sympathetic character to the audience. She is a young girl in love that gets caught up in circumstances beyond her power to control.

*Does the audience's view change?*

No, during the entirety of the show Lucia is a sacrifice to both her brother and the Ravenswood curse.


**Character Morgue**

While character analysis is often a helpful way of exploring your character, it is not the only way. Another method is known as a character morgue. The idea was first suggest to me by Assistant Professor of Theatre Daniel Inouye in his advanced acting class, and I believe that it is particularly helpful to visual learners. A character morgue is a compilation of images of people, places, costumes, etc. to use as a source of visual examples from which to draw information or insights about your character, such as their surroundings, their dress, their emotions, or any other details you wish to focus on in their story. Like the character analysis, there is no right or wrong way to compile a character morgue. The images chosen should be ones that speak to the individual performer regardless of how others might interpret them. A few examples from my character morgue can be seen on the next page. See Appendix 4 for artist credits.

One addition to the character morgue that I find helpful is a list of songs and quotes. When thinking through my character I choose songs that I feel describe the character and their inner mood. Simarly, I find quotes that I consider thought provoking when applied to the character I am portraying. Below I have examples of some of the songs and quotes that I have chosen for Lucia.

Songs:

*Moving On* by Michael Giacchino from *Lost*
*Letting Go* by Patrick Doyle from *Thor*
*Sally's Song* covered by Amy Lee from *The Nightmare Before Christmas: Nightmare Revisited*
*Bring me to Life* by Evanescence
*Hello* by Evaneseence
*My Immortal* by Evanescence

Quotes:

"For virtue's self may too much zeal be had; the worst of madmen is a saint run mad."
Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

"[…] What is madness but nobility of soul at odds with circumstance? […]"
From Theodore Roethke's (1908-1963) poem *In a Dark Time*

"The insane, on occasion, are not without their charms."
Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (1922-2007)

"All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity."
From Dr. Samuel Johnson's (1709-1784) *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*

"There is a pleasure, sure, in being mad which none but madmen know!"
From John Dryden's (1631-1700) *The Spanish Friar, Act II, Scene 1*

"Madness need not be all breakdown. It may also be break-through. It is potential liberation and renewal as well as enslavement and existential death."
From Ronald David Laing's (1927-1989) *The Politics of Experience*

# CHAPTER 5

## BRINGING THE INSANITY TO THE STAGE

### Costume, Hair, and Makeup

As a rule, most little girls love to play dress up and do each other's hair and makeup, and I was no exception to this rule. I remember that costumes were one of the first things that drew me to theatre. A career where I would get to dress-up and play pretend was a dream that I couldn't resist as a child. Not much has changed since my first trip to the theatre. Costumes, hair, and makeup are still three aspects of the theatre that I find to be fascinating. In regards to costume, hair, and makeup for Lucia's Mad Scene, I had to take on the roles of both a designer and dramaturge. However, having no experience in either of these positions did not discourage me. Instead, my inexperience drove me to find a way to create my own vision and transfer it to the stage.

The first challenge in costuming Lucia was deciding in which stylistic time period the piece actually takes place in. The story of Janet Dalrymple took place in the 17th century; Sir Walter Scott set *The Bride of Lammermoor* during the 18th century, and *Lucia di Lammermoor's libretto* references the reign of William and Mary in Act II. At first glance you would assume that costumers would set the show according to the *libretto*, but some costumers are reluctant to do so because of inconsistencies within the *libretto* itself. For example, in Act II Enrico explains to Lucia that King William has died and that Mary's ascension to the throne is what had placed the Ashton family in danger of total ruin. Unfortunately there are two significant details that are

incorrect in Enrico's statement. The first mistake is that Mary would not have had to ascend the throne because she and William were joint rulers. Secondly, Mary died in 1694, eight years before William. These, and other inconsistences, have caused designers to choose a vast array of time periods to set this opera including, but not limited to: the 16th century, 17th century, 19th century, and even the Victorian era.[20] Given the constant mention of beheading in the second act, I feel that the Victorian era is a poor choice considering the common method of execution at the time was hanging. Due to the confusion about what is the most appropriate time period in which to set *Lucia di Lammermoor* I decided to allude to a feeling of antiquity rather than trying to fit the scene into a specific time period.

In the score for *Lucia di Lammermoor* Donizetti actually makes a note on what the costume for Lucia's Mad Scene should look like. He mentions that Lucia enters the scene wearing a plain white dress. When costuming *Lucia* most designers stay true to Donizetti's instructions and place her in a simple white nightgown, but some recent productions have placed her in a more lavish wedding gown for the scene. I personally chose to keep true to the score in creating a plain nightgown and dressing gown. There are several reasons I decided on this specific ensemble. First, the choice of a flowing white nightgown creates a ghost-like or ethereal appearance, which I believe is appropriate for this scene. The second reason I chose a nightgown is that Lucia has stabbed Arturo on their wedding night in their bedchamber. It is under this pretext that I assumed Lucia and Arturo were preparing to consummate their marriage when Lucia's sanity finally gave way. The third and final reason I chose the nightgown was because of the description that Sir Walter Scott gave of Lucy in *The Bride of Lammermoor*. It was impossible for me to banish from my mind the image of Lucy huddling in the fireplace wearing

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[20] Leo Van Witsen, *Costuming for Opera: Who Wears What and Why Volume II* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 129-130.

her blood-stained nightgown. I would have chosen to perform this scene barefoot since it is not a common practice to go to bed wearing shoes, but for safety reasons I decided to wear a pair of tan ballet flats. Ballet flats allow my feet protection from the splinters in the stage floor while still giving the illusion of being barefoot.

Performing a scene that incorporated other actors opened up the possibility of costuming them as well. The main reason I chose not to costume Enrico (played by John Tneoh) and Raimondo (played by Joel Rogier) in Scottish dress of the 16th or 17th centuries was because I only wanted to allude to a time period other than the present. Men's formal wear has changed relatively little over time in comparison to that of their female counterparts, so a tuxedo is an appropriate choice in clothing because of its timeless quality. While it is uncommon for instrumentalists to be in costume, I wanted to make one exception. While I wanted pianist Phyllis Walker and percussionist Drew Ervin to perform in concert black, I felt that flautist Elizabeth Baker needed to stand out for dramatic purposes. Since Elizabeth is acting as the role of the ghost during the voice and flute *cadenza*, I wanted her in color to signify her importance as both an instrumentalist and character. I chose to place the flautist in red for several reasons. Red is often considered to be a color of passion, love, and rage. All three of these emotions play heavily into the thematic material of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The Ravenswood's doom is the ghost maiden's revenge on her murderous lover, and Lucia is the final pawn of her curse. Red is also the color of freshly spilt blood, which is another important aspect of the mad scene. Lucia is covered in Arturo's blood, and the young maiden whose ghost now haunts Lucia was murdered in cold blood. In her *aria* "Regnava nel silenzio," Lucia specifically refers to the water in the fountain turning red from the blood of the poor dead girl. I was not really concerned with the style of Elizabeth's dress because she is still a simply symbolic character.

Designing my hair and makeup for the Mad Scene was fairly simple. Lucia's hair would have been fixed for her wedding day, but after stabbing Arturo it would have become disheveled. While designing a disheveled look seems simple enough, achieving this look is not as easy as it seems. Accepted performance practices dictate that a singer should keep their hair away from their face while performing. This ensures that the performer has a clean polished look, and that they will not be constantly pushing their hair out of their eyes and mouth while singing. While this practice is practical for recital purposes, it does not lend itself to scene work. During the Mad Scene it would make no sense for Lucia's hair to be neat and tidy because she has just violently stabbed her bridegroom. While her hair cannot be perfectly styled, it cannot be so disheveled that it covers her face entirely. When styling my hair for Lucia I determined that I would need to make a compromise between the look of the character and the practical requirements of singing. Keeping my hair partially pulled back ensures that it can still have a disheveled appearance without sacrificing my facial expressions and vocal sound. I will leave some strands of hair around my face, but not enough to become a nuisance.

The makeup used in *Lucia di Lammermoor* has a natural feel to it. The characters that are represented are everyday people, so street makeup, or the type of makeup worn during everyday life, is acceptable. The only exception to this is Lucia. As the opera progresses, Lucia should become more noticeably pale and sickly. By the time of the Mad Scene it should be apparent that in addition to her mind, her body is failing her as well. I am a naturally pale individual, but to emphasize my light skin tone for the Mad Scene I am using a sparing amount of makeup aside from base and dark eye makeup. To give a deathly pallor to my face I will avoid using blush or any other makeup that will give a warm feeling. I will also use a black liquid liner and mascara to give the illusion that my eyes are rounder and a bit more sunken than they actually

are. If I use any lipstick it will be a neutral color. The most difficult task involved with makeup is the use of fake blood. It is possible to make fake blood out of household products but almost all of them use food products, which I wanted to avoid because they do not dry completely and can attract insects. I was particularly worried that the blood I created might not dry entirely, causing it to rub off on the suits of my acting partners. After an extensive search, I decided that it might be more practical to buy a quality fake blood that I knew would dry completely while still looking fresh on my costume. In the end, however, I decided to go for a cheaper approach. I was not concerned about staining my costume, so theatre Professor Eric Phillips suggested that I use red acrylic paint to create the blood spattered effect. He gave me permission to use paint found in the shop, and with the help of senior Musical Theatre major, Amanda Murray, I created the blood-spattered effect. The actual process of spattering the paint was nerve-racking because I only had one shot to get it right. While the finished product is not perfect, I am proud of my handiwork.

### Staging, Set, and Props

Staging, or blocking, a scene can be a tricky task. I have little experience in staging scenes so I decided that it would be beneficial to spend time watching various productions by some of the world's most renowned opera companies, paying particular attention to the staging. It did not take long for me to realize that there would be little I could borrow from these productions due to several inconveniences.

The first of my issues was that I did not have a chorus with which to interact. Since I was the only vocalist on the stage for the first half of the scene, I knew that I had to find a way to keep the scene from becoming stale. One of the ways I attempted to keep the audience engaged

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was through the use of the flute and vibraphone. Please see CHAPTER 5, pages 44-45 for a thorough discussion of these instruments and my interaction with them.

The next two issues that I faced in staging the Mad Scene went hand in hand. Several of the versions of the Mad Scene that I watched were staged at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. The stage at the Metropolitan Opera is rather large and their sets are typically extravagant. Unfortunately for me, I have neither the Metropolitan's stage or budget. The space that I worked in was much smaller and all my expenses were out of pocket. I wish there were some way for me to fit a grand staircase into Mcbeth Recital Hall at Ouachita Baptist University, where I performed the scene, but given the reality of the situation, I was forced to come up with creative ways to use the space I did have. As for the set, I was limited by the small stage and by my budget.

When I began trying to stage the Mad Scene I was daunted by the sheer length of the scene. I wasn't sure if I had the ability to stage a scene that is approximately seventeen minutes in length without the use of a chorus or an extravagant set. The longer I thought about staging, the more problems I seemed to discover. To keep myself from panicking I decided to deal with a single problem at a time. The first and easiest problem to handle was the position of the grand piano. In the standard position for a classical recital the piano would be positioned center stage, but that would deprive me of space I needed for staging the scene. The simple solution was to place the piano stage right to open up the space.

The next challenge was to decide the placement of the bowed vibraphone and the flautist. My first instinct was to have them hidden from the view of the audience because they are both representations of what is going on inside of Lucia's mind. Then I decided that for dramatic purposes I wanted them to be seen. In McBeth Recital Hall there are four upper organ lights

upstage that cast four distinct focal points on the stage. While exploring along the back of the stage I discovered that standing directly under one of these organ lights created a shadowed look that was reminiscent of an apparition. My mind was immediately drawn to one of the Metropolitan Opera's productions of *Lucia* where the ghost maiden that Lucia claims to have seen at the well actually appears in several of the scenes, which suggests that Lucia is not insane from the start of the opera. I liked the idea of the ghost being real and decided to use the lighting to create a ghost. I staged the scene so that Drew Ervin, who played the vibraphone, would stand under the organ light on the far end of stage right and Elizabeth Baker, who played the flute, would be standing under the furthest organ light stage left. My reasoning for placing Drew on stage right was simply because he needed to be standing near the piano since his instrumental line is closely tied to the piano accompaniment. Elizabeth, on the other hand, only played during the voice and flute *cadenza* so she had no need to be near any of the other instrumentalists. Elizabeth's positioning did make it difficult for her to hear me while playing, but this is a problem we were able to overcome by spending more time practicing in the recital hall. Another reason I wanted Elizabeth on a side by herself is because she represented an actual character, the phantom that Lucia saw at the well. In my adaptation of this scene the voice and flute *cadenza* was a conversation between the ghost and Lucia.

Many plans that seem well thought out on paper can often fall apart when put into action. My initial decision to place percussionist Drew Ervin under the stage right organ spot, while a smart artist choice, turned out to be an impractical decision. The vibraphone is not a loud instrument so placing it so far upstage caused it to be drowned out by both the piano and vocalist. There would be no point in keeping the vibraphone if the audience couldn't hear it so I decided to sacrifice one of my artistic staging decisions to keep it. Instead of placing the

vibraphone behind the piano, it will now sit in the crook of the piano. This shift has caused me to sacrifice more stage space, and a key entry and exit point for the performers. This major change has forced me to rethink my original blocking, but it is a change I am willing to make to achieve the sound I want.

Once I had determined the positions of my instrumentalists, I was free to work on creating a set and staging for the vocalists. As I have already mentioned, any set design idea I might have had was limited by my lack of stage space with which to work. I first considered trying to create a dining hall setting with one banquet table and benches, which would be appropriate for the time period and would provide levels to add interest to the staging. After some thought, I discarded this idea. I would have had to buy or create my own table since neither the theatre or opera department had anything that would be suitable, and I didn't have the time or the resources to dedicate to that plan. That left me at square one, but I didn't linger there long. As I thought about the scene I decided that a simple stage setup would be the most practical option. I finally decided that the use of only a chaise lounge, though not entirely time period accurate, would still offer me the levels that I wanted to use and wouldn't distract from the musicians.

The most important decision I made while staging the Mad Scene was offsetting my lack of space on the stage by using the entirety of McBeth Recital Hall for blocking. Instead of entering on stage right for the scene, I determined that it would be more prudent to use an unconventional entrance point to allow for more space in which to move. After discussing this idea with Dr. Garrett, it was determined that I would take advantage of the entire recital hall by entering through the doors at the back of the recital hall. This entrance offered space, levels, and

the element of surprise. I believe starting the scene at the back of the hall immediately captured my audience's interest, and protected me from becoming trapped on the stage too soon.

Creating blocking that is conducive to yourself is not too challenging because as a performer you know what you personally can and cannot do physically do while still creating a sound that is both musical and safe to produce. This becomes a challenge when you have to block other performers. During the staging process of the Mad Scene I have had to take a look at what John Tneoh and Joel Rogier, the performers playing Enrico and Raimondo, are physically capable of and willing to do while singing.

There is only one prop that I used during the Mad Scene: a dagger. The dagger that Lucia uses to kill Arturo is an important detail because it has a story behind it. In the novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* the dagger used to stab Lord Bucklaw was the ceremonial dagger that her younger brother was supposed to wear on the day of the wedding. I have adjusted this to fit my own backstory. Instead of stealing it from her younger brother, who is not a character in the opera, I believe Lucia stole it from Enrico. I put a considerable amount of thought into the type of dagger I wanted to purchase. My first instinct was to stay true to the Scottish heritage of the story and purchase a Scottish dagger, which is known as a dirk. After some consideration I changed my mind. Dirks tend to have long blades and narrow guards. The shape of the guard would have made the dirk difficult to see from stage, and I was concerned that the blade would be too long to work with safely in close quarters. My final decision was to purchase a dagger that had a blade that was around 7-8 ½ inches long because it could be easily seen from stage while still being a safe length to work with. The overall style of the dagger leans more toward a 16th or 17th century feel, hut I fell in love with it because it had a weighty look to it. I did not want Lucia to use a dagger that was highly decorative or feminine because I feared it would

detract from the gravity of the crime she has just committed with it. In killing Arturo, Lucia has finally broken free from the control of her brother, but she has sacrificed her sanity in the process. Lucia is only completely free from Enrico's will in her death, and I wanted a dagger that reflected the dark price she must pay.

The use of the dagger proved to be a challenge in blocking this particular scene. As a martial artist I have been trained how to handle weapons safely, but my partners have not had this experience. In order to block this scene in a safe way I ensured that the dagger stayed in my possession for the majority of the scene. There are moments in the scene where Joel or John had the dagger so I stressed to them the importance of treating the dagger with respect as if it were sharpened. Even a dull blade can cause damage if used flippantly. There are also a few moments where the dagger is on the floor of the chaise lounge, and in those cases I have emphasized the importance of spatial awareness. The chances of an injury with the dagger are slim, but I believe that the safety of my actors is too important to let even a slim possibility be ignored.

**Music**

When I began my college search there were only two schools that caught my interest, Ouachita Baptist University and Belmont University. My first choice was to be accepted into the musical theatre program at Belmont, but I was not. Instead, Belmont offered me a chance to participate in their vocal performance program. I politely declined the offer with a "Thank you, but I never intend to sing classical music." While it is ironic that opera has become one of my greatest passions, it is not entirely surprising. As a child I was always singing. It became so commonplace at home, that my parents would not even notice me singing at the top of my lungs in public settings. While my passion for music has been long standing, it was not until I reached

the collegiate level that I realized how complex it is. Becoming a professional musician is a challenging task, and the musical aspects of this scene put my all of my skills to the test.

Lucia's Mad Scene is rather lengthy, ranging anywhere from seventeen to twenty minutes. A scene of this length and intensity is draining for the performer both physically and mentally. The extended amount of *coloratura* and the varying musical styles represented in the scene are two of the obstacles the singer must face. The significance of Donizetti's music to the Mad Scene of *Lucia di Lammermoor* made it difficult to scale down for the recital hall. I am fortunate that most of the work has already been done in the vocal score for *Lucia di Lammermoor* published by G. Schirmer.[21] The vocal score of an opera, unlike the orchestral score, only shows the vocal lines and a piano reduction of the orchestral parts. It was based on the G. Schirmer version of the vocal score that I made cuts and determined extra instrumentation.

As a musician I tend to be a purist, which simply means that I prefer to perform a work as closely to the composer's original intent as possible. In an ideal world that would mean that I would get to perform this scene with a full orchestra and chorus, but we do not live in an ideal world. As I have already mentioned, I am fortunate that an orchestral reduction for *Lucia* already exists because if it did not it would have been impossible for me to perform the scene. While the issues concerning the lack of an orchestra were easy to handle, I was still faced with the challenge of dealing with the non-existent chorus. Their first chorus entrance on page 189, m. 2 is not sorely missed because the orchestral reduction of the piano line fills out the chords, and I found this applicable to many of their entrances. The only section where the music seemed bare without the chorus was on pages 208-209, mm. 318-332. Instead of leaving this hollow section, I interloped a cut that is used in the *Opera Anthology for Coloratura Soprano* published by G. Schirmer. The anthology shortens the section to seven measures, and it fits seamlessly in

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[21] Gaetano Donizetti, *Lucia di Lammermoor: Vocal Score* (G. Schirmer, Inc., 1926.)

with the rest of the full vocal score. Aside from this simple change, I made no other cuts to the scene structurally.

While there were few cuts to the scene, I did have to determine where I wanted Enrico, Raimondo, and Lucia to sing. The first role that I altered was Raimondo. I chose to cut Raimondo's "Eccola!" before the scene actually began because he had no chorus to inform of Lucia's approach. I could have theoretically had him address the audience, but I wanted to keep the fourth wall in place for this scene. The second change I made concerning Raimondo was to cut his vocal part on page 196, mm.140-148 along with the chorus and Normanno, whom I cut from the scene entirely. The next change I made to Raimondo's vocal line is found on page 200, from the anacrusis into m. 177. In the opera the chorus stops Enrico from harming Lucia out of rage by singing "T'arresta!" in unison. Dramatically this is an important moment so I didn't want to cut it because I don't have a chorus. To solve this problem I assigned the line to Raimondo. The final decision I made concerning Raimondo was the same decision I had to make for Enrico as well. On page 212, m. 381, Raimondo, Enrico, and the chorus begin to lament Lucia's tragic fate, and continue to sing until page 216, m. 419. I was not sure how it would sound if Enrico and Raimondo sang without the chorus. I was afraid that the section would fall flat or sound hollow. My only option to fix this problem would have been to utilize the cut from the *Opera Anthology for Coloratura Soprano*, which means I would have had to cut Lucia's vocal line as well. I was loathe to make that cut because I felt that this section was a wonderful musical representation of Lucia's heightening hysteria, and that her final collapse into unconsciousness would seem a little unbelievable without it. After listening to the reduced orchestral piano line however, I determined that the section would sound full enough without the chorus because the chorus parts could be found in the accompaniment. The one small alteration

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I made in this particular section is one that is considered common performance practice. On page 215, m. 413, I have had Enrico and Raimondo drop out so that the audience's attention will be on Lucia's final "Ah!" Also with accordance to common performance practices I will take the final E-flat up the octave and hold it as long as physically possible. Overall, I was pleased that I was only forced to rearrange a few of the vocal lines.

When performing an opera *aria* or scene there is no competing with a live orchestra for dramatic effect, but when a full orchestra is not available a scene can still be powerful with simply piano accompaniment. This being said, there are two specific instruments from the orchestra that are iconic to Lucia's Mad Scene: the glass harmonica and the flute. The flute and voice *cadenza* is a particularly famous moment in the scene, and I didn't want to sacrifice it. Optional *cadenzas* have been written, and can easily be found in *aria* anthologies. Historically a *cadenza* was an improvisation by the singer to show off their vocal strengths, and some vocalists still create their own today. I chose to follow a standard *cadenza* that plays on melodies found earlier in the opera. While the flute was an easy addition to the scene, the glass harmonica posed a serious challenge. The glass harmonica is a more sophisticated name for an instrument that is, at its core, simply playing glasses filled with varying amounts of water. The sound of a glass harmonica is both haunting and unstable because of the fluctuation of the pitches. The instability of the pitch is an effective symbol of the instability of Lucia's mind. Through the glass harmonica the audience is allowed to hear what is going on inside her head. Despite its added dramatic effect, the glass harmonica does have some problems. It is not the most common instrument to find, and it is difficult to keep in tune during a long performance because the water in the instrument evaporates. These are two of the reasons why Donizetti removed it from the orchestra when he reset *Lucia di Lammermoor* in French. I first heard the glass harmonica used

in one of the recent adaptations of *Lucia* at the Metropolitan Opera. After hearing the scene with the glass harmonica I knew that I had to have that same sound in the scene for my thesis. The main problem was figuring out how to get that sound. Ouachita does not own a glass harmonica, and even if it did there is not anyone here qualified to play it. I quickly began to look for alternatives. I considered replacing the glass harmonica with the flute like Donizetti did in the French version of the opera, but the sound just did not sit right with me. I next considered having someone play the water glasses, but I determined that the sound would not be loud enough to carry in the recital hall. My final solution was to add a bowed vibraphone. The vibraphone is normally played with mallets, but during a senior composition recital I witnessed the percussionist using a bow, like the ones used to play the cello or upright bass, instead. I immediately pursued this idea since the sound made by a bowed vibraphone is similar to the one made by the glass harmonica, and I knew that the university had a vibraphone I could use. The next step I had to take was to decide which notes the glass harmonica actually played. If I had a full orchestral score this would have been a simple task because the parts for each instrument are already written out, but the vocal score only has a condensed orchestral accompaniment intended for piano. This being the case, I was forced to go into the practice room with my I-pod and determine each pitch by ear. As I listened I marked a copy of the score with the pitches for the bowed vibraphone. After notating everything I gave the score to my percussionist Drew Ervin and asked him to look through it and see which sections he believed would be possible on the bowed vibraphone. After listening to Drew play we decided that the slower sections could be bowed, but the faster sections of the scene were too quick for the bow to be used. Drew then suggested that he could still play them by using a mallet and letting the pitches run together to create a distorted sound. The effect is similar to holding down the suspension pedal on the piano

for an extended period of time. I fell in love with the idea, and made the executive decision to keep it. Using the bowed vibraphone in lieu of the glass harmonica is, in my opinion, a wonderful substitution. As far as I know, I am the only person to have tried this particular arrangement. Despite my well laid out plans though, I will not actually be able to use the bowed vibraphone during this particular recital. The school owns two vibraphones, but there are issues with using either of them. The newer vibraphone does not bow well enough to use, and the older vibraphone does not have all the pitches necessary to play the piece. While I sadly won't be able to use the bowed vibraphone, I will still keep the vibraphone incorporated. Drew will use the same distortion technique he was using to play the fast passages throughout the entire piece. Though this is not my first choice, I am still very happy with the result.

Earlier when discussing the flute and bowed vibraphone I placed the word "interaction" in quotations. My purpose for this is because the interaction between the flute, bowed vibraphone, and me is not direct. While the instrumentalists will be visible to the audience, they will be unseen by the men playing Enrico and Raimondo, and myself. Instead of physical interaction, which is what I would use if I had a chorus, the interaction between the instrumentalists and me will be through sound. Not only will Enrico and Raimondo not be able to see them, in the world of the opera they cannot hear them either. The sound of the flute and the bowed vibraphone are entirely in Lucia's mind. They are the voices and heavenly music inside of her head. The voice and flute *cadenza* is the best representation of this concept because Lucia is having a "conversation" with someone, or something, and the guests of the party can only hear her side of the conversation. In my adaptation this someone or something is the ghost of the fountain.

# CHAPTER 6

## MADNESS AS A BREAKTHROUGH

### Acting and the Mad Scene

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in't."[22] Polonius's words from

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* reflect how I feel Lucia's Mad Scene should be approached as an actress.

Yes, this is an insanity scene, but despite how it might appear, the actress portraying Lucia

should not be haphazardly running around the stage flailing her arms about. There are many

methods used within the world of theatre that can assist a performer in portraying a character in a

truthful manner. At Ouachita our acting training focuses on methods rooted in the teachings of

Constantin Stanislavski (1863-1938): most notably those formed by Sanford Meisner (1905-

1997) and Uta Hagen (1919-2004). These Stanislavski-based approaches to acting offer us a

way to avoid relying on stereotypes, allowing a more natural interpretation with which that the

audience can connect. Aspects of these methodologies include character analysis and

preparations. I have already addressed the use of a character analysis, but now I will cover the

use of preparations, also known as preps.

Preps are covered extensively in the Meisner technique, and are considered by some to be

more directly related to a performance than a character analysis is. A character analysis

stimulates the mind in creating a character, while the prep engages the actor's emotions. An

actor who adheres to the Meisner technique will make sure to prep properly before beginning a

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[22] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 2.2.205-206.

performance. Each actor's prep is unique. During a prep the actor will think through scenarios that evoke similar circumstances and emotions to the ones that their character must experience. While preps can be simple, they are oftentimes complex and multilayered. This multilayered prep permits the presence of several emotions during a single scene, which keeps the character from becoming one-dimensional. There are several rules regarding how preps should be conducted, but the most important is that the scenario that the actor uses for their inspiration should be realistic enough that the mind can accept it as truth, yet far away enough from anything that the actor has experienced so that they do not lose control of their emotions. In other words, the prep must be something that is possible but has not actually occurred.

The challenge of prepping for Lucia was daunting. The Mad Scene requires an extreme range of emotions, and the actress singing the role must be able to switch between these emotions seamlessly. While I will not go into the details of my prep, I will confess that it was extremely multilayered. The most important thing that I had to be careful of while prepping was letting the prep get too deep. If I had allowed myself to prep too deeply I would have been in danger of allowing my emotions to interfere with my singing. While being carried away with laughter, crying, or any other extreme emotion might have been a cathartic experience for me, the audience would have been completely dumbfounded by the odd behavior and lack of singing. To avoid this scenario I would stop prepping the moment I heard the opening chords of the scene. Instead, I would take a deep breath and forget the world. Once the scene started I had no use for prepping or running through my character analysis. I was free to focus on the moment without worrying about my technique, both vocal and acting, because the work had already been done. My body and mind knew what it was doing, so paying close attention to them would have only taken me out of the moment.

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Ronald David Laing, a Scottish psychiatrist who specialized in mental illnesses, once said, "Madness need not be all breakdown. It may also be break-through." Lucia's Mad Scene was truly a break-through for me as an actress. I had to be willing to let go of any and all inhibitions that might hold me back during the scene. Performing this scene for my peers and teachers was a daunting idea, and there were times when I wanted to hold myself back from taking risks during the scene. I knew that if I held back my impulses however, that the scene would be flat. Having a methodological approach to the character of Lucia gave me enough confidence in my connection to her that I felt free to take risks.

One of the risky decisions I made was to actually scream in the scene. During the recitative section that takes place in the middle of the scene Donizetti notates a sung "ah" for Lucia. When I first studied the scene I determined that the "ah" served the same dramatic purpose as a scream, and after listening to multiple versions of the scene I discovered that the same interpretation had been made by several singers. The true risk came though when I decided to take that interpretation a step further. Many of the screams were either partially sung or more of a helpless groan, but I wanted it to be a blood curdling moment. Performing a stage scream can be a dangerous choice because often times they sound forced or not fully committed. In the end the risk I took paid off. After my performance I was delighted to have multiple people approach me and compliment me on how realistic that moment was. If I had neglected prepping for this scene I truly doubt I would have been able to perform it in an uninhibited manner.

While it may seem simple, prepping for a scene that is as emotionally challenging as the Mad Scene can have nasty side effects. The emotions that I had to bring out in Lucia's character came from within myself. I was displaying small pieces of myself on the stage for everyone to see and judge. It is a vulnerable place for an actor or actress to reach, and it can be a difficult

place from which to come. After the conclusion of the scene I wanted nothing more than to be left alone, curled up in a ball. Allowing Lucia's insanity to take me over was a difficult place to get to, and an even tougher place for me to leave. Even two days after the recital I still felt a lingering depressing foggy feeling take hold of me. It was a stark reminder of how dangerous investing yourself emotionally into a character can be. It no longer strikes me as a surprise how many actors and actresses can become so emotionally unstable. Often they place so much of their own identity into their characters that they lose themselves. Seeing the struggle for identity that many actors face after portraying dark roles I am reminded how blessed I am that I never have to search for my identity because my identity can be found in Christ.

# APPENDIX 1

Directed Study Opera List

| Baroque (1600-1750) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Opera** | **Composer** | *Librettist(s)* |
| *Giasone* | Francesco Cavalli | Giacinto Andrea Cicognini |
| *Agrippina*<br>*Giulio Cesare in Egitto*<br>*Alcina*<br>*Serse* | George Frideric Handel | Vincenzo Grimani<br>Nicola Francesco Haym<br>Anonymous<br>Anonymous |
| *Armide* | Jean-Baptiste Lully | Philippe Quinault |
| *Orfeo*<br>*L'Incoronazione di Poppea* | Claudio Monteverdi | Alessandro Striggio<br>Giovanni Francesco Busenello |
| *The Beggar's Opera* | Johann Christoph Pepusch | John Gay |
| *Dido and Aeneas* | Henry Purcell | Nahum Tate |
| *Hippolyte et Aricie* | Jean-Philippe Rameau | Simon-Joseph Pellegrin |

| Classical (1750-1820) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Opera** | **Composer** | *Librettist(s)* |
| *Fidelio* | Ludwig von Beethoven | Joseph von Sonnleithner |
| *Médée* | Luigi Cherubini | François-Benoît Hoffman |
| *Il Matrimonio Segreto* | Domenico Cimarosa | Giovanni Bertati |
| *Orfeo ed Euridice*<br>*Alceste*<br>*Armide*<br>*Iphigénie en Tauride* | Christoph Willibald Gluck | Ranieri de' Calzabigi<br>Ranieri de' Calzabigi<br>Philippe Quinault<br>Nicolas-François Guillard |
| *L'infedeltà delusa*<br>*Il mondo della luna*<br>*Armida* | Joseph Haydn | Marco Coltellini<br>Carlo Goldoni<br>Nunziato Porta |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* | Gioachino Rossini | Cesare Sterbini |
| *Idomeneo, Re di Creta*<br>*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*<br><br>*Le nozze di Figaro*<br>*Don Giovanni*<br>*Così fan tutte*<br>*La clemenza di Tito*<br>*Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | Giovanni Battista Varesco<br>Christoph Friedrich Bretzner<br><br>Lorenzo da Ponte<br>Lorenzo da Ponte<br>Lorenzo da Ponte<br>Pietro Metastasio<br>Emanuel Schikaneder |

### Romantic (1820-1900)

| Opera | Composer | *Librettist(s)* |
|---|---|---|
| *Carmen* | Georges Bizet | Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy |
| *Lucia di Lammermoor*<br>*Don Pasquale* | Gaetano Donizetti | Salvadore Cammarano<br>Giovanni Ruffini |
| *Andrea Chenier* | Umberto Giordano | Luigi Illica |
| *Pagliacci* | Ruggero Leoncavallo | Ruggero Leoncavallo |
| *Les contes d'Hoffman* | Jacques Offenbach | Jules Barbier |
| *Manon Lescaut*<br>*La Bohème*<br>*Tosca* | Giacomo Puccini | Domenico Oliva and Luigi Illica<br>Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica<br>Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica |
| *Guillaume Tell* | Gioachino Rossini | Étienne de Jouy and Hippolyte-Louis-Florent Bis |
| *Macbeth*<br>*Rigoletto*<br>*La Traviata*<br>*Un Ballo in Maschera*<br>*Aida*<br>*Otello*<br>*Falstaff* | Giuseppe Verdi | Francesco Maria Piave<br>Francesco Maria Piave<br>Francesco Maria Piave<br>Antonio Somma<br>Antonio Ghislanzoni<br>Arrigo Boito<br>Arrigo Boito |
| *Tristan und Isolde*<br>*Der Ring des Nibelungen* | Richard Wagner | Richard Wagner<br>Richard Wagner |

# 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900-Present)

| Opera | Composer | *Librettist(s)* |
|---|---|---|
| *Nixon in China* | John Adams | Alice Goodman |
| *Wozzeck* | Alban Berg | Alban Berg |
| *The Turn of the Screw* | Benjamin Britten | Myfanwy Piper |
| *Rusalka* | Antonin Dvořák | Jaroslav Kvapil |
| *Porgy and Bess* | George Gershwin | DuBose Heyward |
| *Einstein on the Beach* | Philip Glass | Christopher Knowles, Lucinda Childs, and Samuel M. Johnson |
| *Mathis der Maler* | Paul Hindemith | Paul Hindemith |
| *Hansel und Gretel* | Engelbert Humperdinck | Adelheid Wette |
| *Don Quichotte* | Jules Massenet | Henri Cain |
| *Amahl and the Night Visitors* | Gian Carlo Menotti | Gian Carlo Menotti |
| *The Ballad of Baby Doe* | Douglas Moore | John Latouche |
| *The Love for Three Oranges* | Sergey Prokofiev | Sergey Prokofiev |
| *Madama Butterfly*<br><br>*Il Trittico*<br>*Turandot* | Giacomo Puccini | Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica<br><br>Various<br>Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni |
| *The Golden Cockerel* | Nicolay Rimsky-Korsakov | Vladimir Nikolayevich Bel'sky |
| *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* | Dmitry Shostakovich | Alexander Preys |
| *Salome*<br>*Intermezzo* | Richard Strauss | Hedwig Lachmann<br>Richard Strauss |
| *The Rake's Progress* | Igor Stravinsky | W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman |
| *Die Dreigroschenoper* | Kurt Weill | Bertolt Brecht |

APPENDIX 2

Female Roles and their *Fächer*

| Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) |
| Adele- A clever and saucy maid. | *Die Fledermaus* | Johann Strauss, Jr. | "Mein Herr Marquis" |
| Alcina- A sorceress. | *Alcina* | George Frideric Handel | "Tornami a vagheggiar" |
| Aspasia- Princess torn between her betrothed and his son. | *Mitridate, re di Ponto* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Nel sen mi palpita" |
| Blondchen- A witty British maid. | *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln" and "Welche Wonne, welche Lust" |
| Cleopatra- Egyptian queen. | *Giulio Cesare* | George Frideric Handel | "Piangerò la sorte mia" and "V'adoro, pupille" |
| Elvira- Daughter of a Puritan Governor-General, goes crazy. | *I Puritani* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Qui la voce…Vien, diletto" |
| Giulietta- Love-sick teen, kills herself. | *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Eccomi in lieta vesta…Oh! Quante volte, Oh! Quante" |
| Juliette- Love sick teen, kills herself. | *Romeo et Juliette* | Charles- François Gounod | "Je veux vivre […]" |
| Lakmé- Daughter of a Brahmin priest in India. | *Lakmé* | Leo Delibes | "Où va la jeune Hindoue" |
| Marie- Daughter of the regiment. | *La Fille du Régiment* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Chacun le sait" |
| Mathilde- An Austrian princess who is in love with the enemy. | *Guillaume Tell* | Gioacchino Rossini | "Sombre forêt" |
| Norina- A feisty and quick-witted young | *Don Pasquale* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Quel guardo il cavaliere…So anch'io |

| | | | la virtù magica" |
|---|---|---|---|
| Olympia- A doll. | *Les contes d'Hoffmann* | Jacques Offenbach | "Les oiseaux dans la charmille" |
| Oscar- Trouser role, he is a page. | *Un ballo in maschera* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Saper vorreste" and "Volta la Terrea" |
| Philine- A *prima donna.* | *Mignon* | Ambroise Thomas | "Je suis Titania" |
| Zerbinetta- A *prima donna.* | *Ariadne auf Naxos* | Richard Strauss | "Großmächtige Prinzessin…Noch glaub' ich dem einen ganz mich gehörend" |

### Dramatic Coloratura

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Abigaille- Wants revenge on her "father" Nabucco. | *Nabucco* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Anch'io dischiuso un giorno" |
| Anne Trulove- A lovesick girl determined to find her lover. | *The Rake's Progress* | Igor Stravinsky | "No word from Tom…I go to him" |
| Baby Doe- Falls in love with a married man (true story). | *The Ballad of Baby Doe* | Douglas Moore | "Willow Song," "Dearest Mama," "The Silver Aria," and "Always through the changing" |
| Donna Anna- Victim of Don Giovanni who wants revenge. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non mi dir" |
| Elvira- Is betrothed to her uncle, but is in love with Ernani. | *Ernani* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Ernani, Ernani involami" |
| Fiordiligi- Is conflicted about her feelings. | *Così fan tutte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Come scoglio" and "Per pieta" |
| Helen- A conspirator. | *I vespri siciliani* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Merce, dilette amiche" |
| Konstanze- A Noblewoman who is in captivity. | *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ach, ich liebte" |
| Lucia- In love with a rival of the family. She goes insane. | *Lucia di Lammermoor* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Regnava nel silenzio" and the Mad Scene |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Odabella- Wishes to take revenge on Attila. | *Attila* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Allor che I forti corrono" and "Oh! Nel fuggente nuvolo" |
| Queen of the Night-REVENGE! Pamina's mother. | *Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "O zittre nicht...Zum Leiden bin ich auserkoren" and "Der Hölle Rache" |
| Vitellia- Daughter of a deposed emperor. In love with Titus. | *La Clemenza di Tito* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non più di fiori" |

| Lyric Soprano | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Role/Character Note** | **Opera** | **Composer** | **Example *Aria*(s)** |
| Annina- A deeply religious girl. Has been having visions. | *The Saint of Bleecker Street* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "Ah, sweet Jesus, spare me this agony" |
| Antonia- A sick girl. | *Les contes d'Hoffman* | Jacques Offenbach | "Elle a fui, la tourterelle" |
| Dew Fairy- Is a dew fairy... | *Hansel und Gretel* | Engelbert Humperdinck | "Der kleine Taumann heiß' ich" |
| Eudoxie- A princess. | *La Juive* | Jacques Halevy | "Tandis qu'il sommeille" |
| Gilda- The naïve daughter of Rigoletto. Seduced by the Duke. | *Rigoletto* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Caro nome" |
| Jenny MacDougald- A young girl who lives on a plantation. | *The Sojourner and Mollie Sinclair* | Carlisle Floyd | "Someday I'm sure to marry you" |
| Lauretta- Daughter of Gianni Schicchi. | *Gianni Schicchi* | Giacomo Puccini | "O mio babbino caro" |
| Laetitia- A young unmarried maid. | *Old Maid and the Thief* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "Steal me, sweet thief" |
| Liu- A young slave girl, dies for the man she loves. | *Turandot* | Giacomo Puccini | "Tu che di gel sei cinta" and "Signore, ascolta" |
| Magda-A young woman | *La Rondine* | Giacomo Puccini | "Chi il bel sogno di Doretta" |
| Manon- A girl being sent to a convent, but falls in love. | *Manon* | Jules Massenet | "Adieu, notre petite table" |
| Marenka- A village girl. | *The Bartered Bride* | Bedrich Smetana | "Ah, my darling, we could grow together like a single vine" |
| Marzelline- A young | *Fidelio* | Ludwig van | "O wär' ich schon mit |

| | | Beethoven | dir vereint" |
|---|---|---|---|
| girl, daughter of the jailer. | | | |
| Micaëla-A pretty country girl looking for her love. | *Carmen* | Georges Bizet | "Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante" |
| Mimi- Poor and shy girl. Has TB. | *La Bohème* | Giacomo Puccini | "Mi chiamano Mimi" and "Donde lieta" |
| Monica- A teenage girl whose mother is a fake medium. | *The Medium* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "The Black Swan" and "Monica's Waltz" |
| Musetta- a flirty and flamboyant girl. Gets what she wants. | *La Bohème* | Giacomo Puccini | "Quando m'en vo" |
| Nannetta- A country village girl. | *Falstaff* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Sul fil d'un soffio etesio" |
| Nedda- Young wife of a commedia dell'arte troup leader. | *I Pagliacci* | Ruggiero Leoncavallo | "Qual fiamma avea nel guardo!" |
| Pamina- Daughter of the Queen of the Night. | *Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ach, ich fühl's" |
| Susanna- A clever maid. | *Le nozze di Figaro* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Deh vieni, non tardar" |
| Susannah- A beautiful Southern girl. | *Susannah* | Carlisle Floyd | "Ain't it a pretty night?" and "The trees on the mountain" |
| Suzel- Daughter of a steward to a rich landowner. | *L'amico Fritz* | Pietro Mascagni | "Son pochi fiori" |
| Zerlina- A flirty village girl. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Batti, batti" and "Vedrai carino" |

| Spinto | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Role/Character Note** | **Opera** | **Composer** | **Example *Aria*(s)** |
| Leonora- A girl whose tragic love leads her to suffering. | *La forza del destino* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Pace, pace mio Dio!" |
| Manon- Was sent to a convent, but falls in love. | *Manon Lescaut* | Giacomo Puccini | "In quelle trine morbide" |
| Marietta- A young dancer. | *Die tote Stadt* | Erich Korngold | "Gluck, das mir verblieb" and "Dich such' ich Bild!" |
| Suor Angelica- Was | *Suor Angelica* | Giacomo Puccini | "Senza Mamma" |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| sent to a convent. | | | |
| Vanessa-A woman who has waited 20 years for her lover. | *Vanessa* | Samuel Barber | "Do not utter a word" |
| Wally- A girl who is turned out of her home for love. | *La Wally* | Alfredo Catalani | "Ebben! Ne andrò lontana" |

## Dramatic Soprano

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ariadne- An actress playing the part of Ariadne in a show. | *Ariadne auf Naxos* | Richard Strauss | "Es gibt ein Reich" |
| Aida- slave, daughter of the Ethiopian king. | *Aida* | Giuseppe Verdi | "O patria mia" and "Ritorna vincitor" |
| La Gioconda- A street singer in Venice. | *La Gioconda* | Amilcare Ponchielli | "Suicido" |
| Lady Macbeth- Goes CRAZY and dies! | *Macbeth* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Vieni! T'affretta...Or Tutti, sorgete" and "Una macchia e qui tuttora!" |
| Leonora- A woman trying to save her husband. | *Fidelio* | Ludwig van Beethoven | "Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin? [...] Komm, Hoffnung" |
| Norma- A Druid high priestess. | *Norma* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Casta diva" |
| Senta- Girl who is faithful to her vow till death. | *Der fliegende Holländer* | Richard Wagner | |
| Turandot- A cold and beautiful Chinese princess. | *Turandot* | Giacomo Puccini | "In questa reggia" |

## Full Lyric

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amelia- Renato's wife, in love with Riccardo. | *Un ballo in maschera* | Giuseppe Verdi | |
| Countess- Is in love with her husband despite his disloyalty. | *Le nozze di Figaro* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Porgi amor, qualche ristoro" and "Dove sono" |
| Desdemona- Wife of | *Otello* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Ave Maria" and |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Otello, loves him dearly. | | | "Mia madre aveva una povera ancella" |
| Luisa- A young village girl. | *Luisa Miller* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Lo vidi e 'l primo palpito" and "Tu puniscimi, o signore" |
| Madama Butterfly- A young Japanese woman who marries an American sailor during WWII. | *Madama Butterfly* | Giacomo Puccini | "Un Bel Di" |
| Magda- A woman trying to get to her husband. Kills herself. | *The Consul* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "To this we've come" |
| Marguerite- A young and imaginative girl. | *Faust* | Charles Gounod | "Ah, je ris de me voir" |
| Roselinda- A woman who tricks her husband at a masked ball. | *Die Fledermaus* | Johann Strauss, Jr. | "Klänge der Heimat" |
| Salome- Abandoned daughter of King Herod's wife Herodias. | *Herodiade* | Jules Massenet | "Il est doux, il est bon" |
| Tatiana- A girl who falls in love, but her love is not returned. | *Eugene Onegin* | Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky | "Ruskai pogibnu" |
| Tosca- A beautiful and famous singer. | *Tosca* | Giacomo Puccini | "Vissi d'arte" |

# APPENDIX 3

Character Types in Opera

| The Divas (The Drama Queens!) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
| Ariadne- An actress playing the part of Ariadne in a show. | *Ariadne auf Naxos* | Richard Strauss | "Es gibt ein Reich" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Olympia- A doll. | *Les contes d'Hoffmann* | Jacques Offenbach | "Les oiseaux dans la charmille" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Philine- A *prima donna*. | *Mignon* | Ambroise Thomas | "Je suis Titania" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Zerbinetta- A *prima donna*. | *Ariadne auf Naxos* | Richard Strauss | "Großmächtige Prinzessin [...] Noch glaub' ich dem einen ganz mich gehörend" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |

| The Sweet (The cute innocent ones, aka slightly boring to play.) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
| Antonia- A sick girl. | *Les contes d'Hoffman* | Jacques Offenbach | "Elle a fui, la tourterelle" | Lyric Soprano |
| Lauretta- Daughter of Gianni Schicchi. | *Gianni Schicchi* | Giacomo Puccini | "O mio babbino caro" | Lyric Soprano |
| Marenka- A village girl. | *The Bartered Bride* | Bedrich Smetana | "Ah, my darling, we could grow [...]" | Lyric Soprano |
| Marzelline- A young girl, daughter of the jailer. | *Fidelio* | Ludwig van Beethoven | "O wär' ich schon mit dir vereint" | Lyric Soprano |
| Mathilde- An Austrian princess who is in love with the enemy. | *Guillaume Tell* | Gioacchino Rossini | "Sombre forêt" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |

| Micaëla-A pretty country girl looking for her love. | *Carmen* | Georges Bizet | "Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante" | Lyric Soprano |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mimi- Poor and shy girl. Has TB. | *La Bohème* | Giacomo Puccini | "Mi chiamano Mimi" and "Donde lieta" | Lyric Soprano |
| Nannetta- A country village girl. | *Falstaff* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Sul fil d'un soffio etesio" | Lyric Soprano |
| Pamina- Daughter of the Queen of the Night. | *Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ach, ich fühl's" | Lyric Soprano |
| Suzel- Daughter of a steward to a rich landowner. | *L'amico Fritz* | Pietro Mascagni | "Son pochi fiori" | Lyric Soprano |
| Zerlina- A flirty village girl. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Batti, batti" and "Vedrai carino" | Lyric Soprano |

## The Tragic
### (Those who give it all for love while still keeping their sanity.)

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aida- slave, daughter of the Ethiopian king. | *Aida* | Giuseppe Verdi | "O patria mia" and "Ritorna vincitor" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Baby Doe- Falls in love with a married man (true story). | *The Ballad of Baby Doe* | Douglas Moore | "Willow Song," "Dearest Mama," "The Silver Aria," and "Always through the changing" | Coloratura/Dramatic Coloratura |
| Gilda- The naïve daughter of Rigoletto. Seduced by the Duke. | *Rigoletto* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Caro nome" | Lyric Soprano |
| La Gioconda- A street singer in Venice. | *La Gioconda* | Amilcare Ponchielli | "Suicido" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Giulietta- Love sick teen, kills herself. | *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Eccomi in lieta vesta...Oh! Quante volte, Oh! Quante" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Juliette- Love sick teen, kills herself. | *Romeo et Juliette* | Charles-François Gounod | "Je veux vivre [...]" | Lyric/Lyric Coloratura |
| Leonora- A girl | *La Forza del* | Giuseppe | "Pace, pace mio | Spinto |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| whose tragic love leads her to suffering. | *Destino* | Verdi | Dio!" | |
| Liu- A young slave girl, dies for the man she loves. | *Turandot* | Giacomo Puccini | "Tu che di gel sei cinta" and "Signore, ascolta" | Lyric Soprano |
| Luisa- A young village girl. | *Luisa Miller* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Lo vidi e 'l primo palpito" and "Tu puniscimi, o signore" | Full Lyric |
| Madama Butterfly- A young Japanese woman who marries an American sailor during WWII. | *Madama Butterfly* | Giacomo Puccini | "Un Bel Di" | Full Lyric |
| Magda- A woman trying to get to her husband. Kills herself. | *The Consul* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "To this we've come" | Full Lyric |
| Nedda- Young wife of a commedia dell'arte troup leader. | *I Pagliacci* | Ruggiero Leoncavallo | "Qual fiamma avea nel guardo!" | Lyric Soprano |
| Salome- Abandoned daughter of King Herod's wife Herodias. | *Herodiade* | Jules Massenet | "Il est doux, il est bon" | Full Lyric |
| Senta- Girl who is faithful to her vow till death. | *Der fliegende Holländer* | Richard Wagner | | Dramatic Soprano |
| Tosca- A beautiful and famous singer. | *Tosca* | Giacomo Puccini | "Vissi d'arte" | Full Lyric |
| Wally- A girl who is turned out of her home for love. | *La Wally* | Alfredo Catalani | "Ebben! Ne andrò lontana" | Spinto |

| The Sassy (These ladies have attitude and/or wit.) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Role/Character Note** | **Opera** | **Composer** | **Example *Aria*(s)** | *Fach* |
| Adele- A clever and saucy maid. | *Die Fledermaus* | Johann Strauss, Jr. | "Mein Herr Marquis" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Adina- Popular girl in the village that | *L'elisir d'amore* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Della crudele Isotta" and "Prendi; | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |

| | | | prendi, per mei sei" | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Blondchen- A witty British maid. | *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln" and "Welche Wonne, welche Lust" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Despina- A brash and witty maid. | *Cosi fan tutte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "In uomini, in soldati" and "Una donna a quindici anni" | Played by many different voice types. |
| Dorine- A brash and clever maid. | *Tartuffe* | Kirke Mechem | "Fair Robin I love" | Played by many different voice types. |
| Laetitia- A young unmarried maid. | *Old Maid and the Thief* | Gian Carlo Menotti | "Steal me, sweet thief" | Lyric Soprano |
| Norina- A feisty and quick witted young widow. | *Don Pasquale* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtù magica" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Musetta- a flirty and flamboyant girl. Gets what she wants. | *La Bohème* | Giacomo Puccini | "Quando m'en vo" | Lyric Soprano |
| Oscar- Trouser role, he is a page. | *Un ballo in maschera* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Saper vorreste" and "Volta la Terrea" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Roselinda- A woman who tricks her husband at a masked ball. | *Die Fledermaus* | Johann Strauss, Jr. | "Klänge der Heimat" | Full Lyric |
| Susanna- A clever maid. | *Le nozze di Figaro* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Deh vieni, non tardar" | Lyric Soprano |

| The Vengeful (Those that are out to get someone for some reason.) | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role/Character Note** | **Opera** | **Composer** | **Example *Aria*(s)** | *Fach* |
| Abigaille- Wants revenge on her "father" Nabucco. | *Nabucco* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Anch'io dischiuso un giorno" | Dramatic Coloratura |
| Alcina- A sorceress. | *Alcina* | George Frideric Handel | "Tornami a vagheggiar" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |

| Donna Anna- Victim of Don Giovanni who wants revenge. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non mi dir" | Dramatic Coloratura |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Odabella- Wishes to take revenge on Attila. | *Attila* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Allor che i forti corrono" and "Oh! Nel fuggente nuvolo" | Dramatic Coloratura |
| Queen of the Night- REVENGE! Pamina's mother. | *Die Zauberflöte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "O zittre nicht...Zum Leiden bin ich auserkoren" and "Der Hölle Rache" | Dramatic Coloratura |

| | | | | |
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### The Crazies
**(No need for an explanation here.)**

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Donna Elvira- Loves; no, hates; no, loves Don Giovanni. | *Don Giovanni* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ah! Fuggi il traditor" and "Mi Tradi" | Full Lyric |
| Elvira- Daughter of a Puritan governor- general, goes crazy. | *I Puritani* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Qui la voce...Vien, diletto" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Lady Macbeth- Goes CRAZY and dies! | *Macbeth* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Vieni! T'affretta [...] Or Tutti, sorgete" and "Una macchia e qui tuttora!" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Lucia- In love with a rival of the family. She goes insane. | *Lucia di Lammermoor* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Regnava nel silenzio" and the Mad Scene | Dramatic Coloratura |
| Ophelia- Is in love with Hamlet. Goes insane. | *Hamlet* | Ambroise Thomas | "A vos jeux, mes amis [...] Partagez-vous mes fleurs!" | Dramatic or Lyric Coloratura |

| | | | | |
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### The Noble
**(Those who handle a bad situation with grace.)**

| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amelia- Renato's wife, in love with | *Un ballo in maschera* | Giuseppe Verdi | | Full Lyric |

| Riccardo. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anna Bolena- 2nd wife of Henry VIII. | *Anna Bolena* | Gaetano Donizetti | "Al dolce guidami Castel nation" | Full Lyric |
| Aspasia- Princess torn between her betrothed and his son. | *Mitridate, re di Ponto* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Nel sen mi palpita" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Beatrice di Tenda- Widow who marries for political reasons. | *Beatrice di Tenda* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Ah! Se un'urna e a me concessa" | Coloratura/Dramatic Coloratura |
| Cleopatra- Egyptian queen. | *Giulio Cesare* | George Frideric Handel | "Piangerò la sorte mia" and "V'adoro, pupille" | Coloratura/Lyric Coloratura |
| Countess- Is in love with her husband despite his disloyalty. | *Le nozze di Figaro* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Porgi amor, qualche ristoro" and "Dove sono" | Full Lyric |
| Desdemona- Wife of Otello, loves him dearly. | *Otello* | Giuseppe Verdi | "Ave Maria" and "Mia madre aveva una povera ancella" | Full Lyric |
| Eudoxie- A princess. | *La Juive* | Jacques Halevy | "Tandis qu'il sommeille" | Lyric Soprano |
| Fiordiligi- Is conflicted about her feelings. | *Così fan tutte* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Come scoglio" and "Per pietà" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Konstanze- A noblewoman who is in captivity. | *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Ach, ich liebte" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Maria Stuarda- Mary Queen of Scots. We all know the story. | *Maria Stuarda* | Gaetano Donizetti | | Dramatic Soprano |
| Norma- A Druid high priestess. | *Norma* | Vincenzo Bellini | "Casta diva" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Tatiana- A girl who falls in love, but her love is not returned. | *Eugene Onegin* | Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky | "Ruskai pogibnu" | Full Lyric |
| Vanessa-A woman who has waited 20 years for her lover. | *Vanessa* | Samuel Barber | "Do not utter a word" | Spinto |

| The Redeemed (Those women who make mistakes or are "bad," but find peace and/or love in the end.) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Role/Character Note | Opera | Composer | Example *Aria*(s) | *Fach* |
| Blanche de la Force- A noble girl turned nun. | *Dialogues des Carmélites* | Francis Poulenc | | Full Lyric |
| Marguerite- A young and imaginative girl. | *Faust* | Charles Gounod | "Ah, je ris de me voir" | Full Lyric |
| Suor Angelica- Was sent to a convent. | *Suor Angelica* | Giacomo Puccini | "Senza Mamma" | Spinto |
| Thaïs- An actress/courtesan turned nun. | *Thaïs* | Jules Massenet | "Dis-moi que je suis belle et que je serai belle, éternellement" | Full Lyric |
| Turandot- A cold and beautiful Chinese princess. | *Turandot* | Giacomo Puccini | "In questa reggia" | Dramatic Soprano |
| Vitellia- Daughter of a deposed emperor. In love with Titus. | *La Clemenza di Tito* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | "Non più di fiori" | Dramatic Coloratura |

APPENDIX 4

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