2018 – 2019 Opera Season
Recommended Listening and Reading List

A collaboration of Pittsburgh Opera and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Music Department, with special thanks to Rebekah Hill and Julie Hanify.

Please note that there are other books, CDs, and DVDs beyond this list available at the
Carnegie Library and for purchase at your favorite store. Call numbers indicate holdings
of the Music Department, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, unless otherwise indicated.
(For more information about borrowing materials, call Music, Film, and Audio,
412-622-3105, or visit the website at http://www.carnegielibrary.org/)

The Music Department at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh offers an extensive
collection of materials pertaining to opera, from composer biographies, studies of
operas, and histories of opera, to opera libretti, opera scores, and performances on
CD and DVD. The items listed below constitute a small selection to whet your
appetite as you look forward to the live performance. Enjoy!

**Madama Butterfly** by Giacomo Puccini, 1858 – 1924

**CD / DVD**
Are these items checked out? Not to worry, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Main
(Oakland) owns 7 other CD versions of the opera!

Gheorghiu, Shkosa, Kaufmann, Capitanucci; Pappano, Orchestra and Chorus dell’
Accademia nazionale di Santa Cecilia
COMPACT DISC Op Puc 36656

Tebaldi, Cossotto, Bergonzi, Sordello; Serafin, Santa Cecilia Orchestra and Chorus
COMPACT DISC Op Puc 30572
**Madama Butterfly** by Giacomo Puccini, 1858 – 1924

     Voulgaridou, Damian, Illncai, Vasar; Joel, Philharmoniker Hamburg, Chor der Staatsoper Hamburg
     (DVD) M1500.P97 M17 2014x

     Racette, Zifchak, Giordani, Croft; Summers, The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus
     (DVD) M1500.P97 M17 2011x

     Freni, Ludwig, Domingo, Kerns; Karajan, Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna State Opera Choir
     (DVD) M1500.P97 M17 2005x

**Libretto**

Includes side-by-side English and Italian and synopsis of the opera.
ML49.P75 W42

**For further reading**

Budden, most known for his treatment of the operas of Verdi, seems equally at home with Verdi’s fellow countryman. A brief biography gives way to in-depth analyses of all of Puccini’s operas. In the chapter on *Madama Butterfly*, Budden describes the opera’s creation, interprets the numerous musical motifs, and describes the storyline as one of “action that evolves steadily.” The audience is drawn into a 3-year period of Butterfly’s life, a span that begins with romance and ends in grief.
ML410.P89 B83 2002

Osborne is the “go-to” man if you want detailed treatments of opera composers. He has also written books about the works of Mozart, Richard Strauss, Verdi, and Wagner.
Osborne’s discussion of *Madama Butterfly* begins with an account of how the work was created and premiered. The middle section discusses the plot and characters, comparing Puccini’s versions of the main characters and the opera’s libretto to the source material of John Luther Long’s story and David Belasco’s play. Osborne believes that the opera vastly improves the source material—do you agree? The last section of his discussion outlines the work’s musical motifs.
ML410.P89 O8 1982x
**Madama Butterfly** by Giacomo Puccini, 1858 – 1924


The author discusses the origins of the opera’s libretto, the real-life woman who inspired the character of Cho-Cho-San, and the influence of the Japanese aesthetic on turn of the twentieth century Western artists like Puccini.

ML410.P89 R55 2001


Wilson explores the debates about Puccini as a composer. Was he an Italian nationalist or an international artist? Did he modernize opera or did he continue its traditions? The chapter about *Madama Butterfly* is titled, “A frame without a canvas: *Madama Butterfly* and the superficial.” The opera was a huge flop upon its premiere. Many critics believed that Puccini focused too much on style over substance. Wilson suggests that they were challenged by Puccini’s modern score—an interesting argument.

ML410.P89 W53 2007

**Hansel and Gretel** by Engelbert Humperdinck, 1854 – 1921

**CD / DVD**

*Are these items checked out? Not to worry, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Main (Oakland) owns 4 other CD versions of the opera!*

  Larmore, Ziesak, Behrens, Weikl;
  Runnicles, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks
  COMPACT DISC Op Hum 14950

  Fassbaender, Popp, Hamari, Berry; Solti, Wiener Philharmoniker
  COMPACT DISC Op Hum 39560

**DVD**  *Hansel and Gretel*, EMI Classics, 2008. (sung in English)
  Coote, Schäfer, Plowright, Held; Jurowski, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra
  (DVD) M1500.H946 H3 2008x

  Fassbaender, Gruberova, Dernesch, Prey; Solti, Wiener Philharmoniker, Wiener Sängerknaben
  (DVD) M1500.H946 H3 2005x
**Hansel and Gretel** by Engelbert Humperdinck, 1854 – 1921

**Special note about searching:** In order to achieve the best results, you may wish to use a title search in the original language: *Hansel und Gretel*. You’ll be sure not to miss any of our holdings!

**Libretto:**


q ML48.G458 2005x

**For further reading:**


Bettelheim, a Freud scholar, analyzes classic fairy tales according to Freud’s methods. The author believes that fairy tales, even the scary ones, can teach children about the struggles in life and provide models for behavior. *Hansel and Gretel* is a fine story for Bettelheim’s theories with its plot line of children being cast into the forest by their angry mother, getting lost in the forest, and fighting against an evil witch. Scary indeed!

GR550.B47 1991x


From the book jacket: “. . . makes available in English all 156 stories from the 1812 and 1815 editions.” New illustrations by Andrea Dezső accompany these familiar tales in a new translation.

GR166.G54313 2014x
**afterWARds** a new chamber opera
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756 – 1791, distilled by David Paul 1982 –

**afterWARds** uses the words and music of Mozart's *IDOMENEO*—perhaps his most radical, modern opera—in a reorganized and distilled 80-minute format that shifts the opera's focus towards its four protagonists. *(description from the Pittsburgh Opera website)*

**CD / DVD**
Are these items checked out? Not to worry, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Main (Oakland) owns 2 other CD versions of the opera!

Bostridge, Lieberson, Milne, Frittoli; Mackerras, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Edinburgh Festival Chorus
COMPACT DISC Op Moz 19613

Rolfe Johnson, von Otter, McNair, Martinpelto; Gardiner, The English Baroque Soloists, The Monteverdi Choir [performed on authentic instruments]
COMPACT DISC Op Moz 4574

Ainsley, Breslik, Banse, Dasch; Nagano, Bayerisches Staatsorchester, Chor und Extrachor der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Bewegungchor der Bayerischen Staatsoper
(DVD) M1500.M84 I3 2009x

Lewis, Goeke, Betley, Barstow; Pritchard, The London Philharmonic Orchestra, The Glyndebourne Chorus
(DVD) M1500.M84 I3 2004x

**Libretto**

ML49.M83 O64 2011
afterWARds a new chamber opera
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756 – 1791, distilled by David Paul 1982 –

For further reading

Cairns’ unique biography traces Mozart’s life and creative output through his operas.
Cairns discusses how Mozart matured as an artist with each opera and writes about how
his strength as a composer of great theater influences his instrumental works as well,
particularly his piano concertos and string quartets. The chapter that highlights Idomeneo
describes this opera as a point of maturity in Mozart’s operatic output. Mozart turns opera
seria, an opera based on classical or mythological themes, on its head and creates his
own unique voice for 18th century opera, one full of orchestral color and impassioned
vocal writing.
ML410.M9 C253 2006

Gutman’s biography, as the title suggests, discusses Mozart’s life in relation to
eighteenth-century Europe — the politics, the social scene. and the artistic trends. The
chapter, “The Second Bavarian Miracle,” details the tempestuous creation of Idomeneo.
The emotional turmoil suffered by Mozart during this time led to severing himself from his
family, especially his father, and going to Vienna, a city that inspired his greatest opera
triumphs, including The Marriage of Figaro and Don Giovanni.
ML410.M9 G96 1999

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: A Biography by Piero Melograni. Chicago: University of Chicago
Written during the 250th anniversary year of Mozart’s death, Melograni’s biography is a
wonderful addition to the many volumes written about the composer. Avoiding in-depth
musical analyses, Melograni instead weaves the texts of Mozart’s letters throughout his
narrative to create a thoroughly enjoyable account of the artist’s life. A great read for the
music lover or novice.
ML410.M9 M4313 2007

W. A. Mozart, Idomeneo by Julian Rushton. Cambridge [England]; New York, N.Y., USA:
Cambridge University Press, 1993
Part of the Cambridge Opera Handbooks series, this volume contains several essays that
discuss the creation of this opera, its mythological background, and the musical language
employed by Mozart in Idomeneo.
ML410.M9 R89 1993
**Glory Denied** by Tom Cipullo, 1956 –
Based on the oral history, *Glory Denied*, Tom Philpott, 1951 –

**CD / DVD**

**CD**  
Mayes, Worra, Mancasola, Blalock; Deaton, Members of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra  
COMPACT DISC Op Cip 49844

**Libretto**

The libretto, written by Tom Cipullo and based on *Glory Denied: The Saga of Jim Thompson, America's Longest-Held Prisoner of War* by Tom Philpott, has not been commercially published.

**For further reading**

Philpott’s book tells the story of Colonel Jim Thompson, the longest serving American prisoner of war in American history. After surviving as a POW during the Vietnam War, Thompson’s return to his family life is full of more pain and betrayal. An honest and heart-breaking tale of a modern American war hero.  
DS559.4.T47 P47 2001

[www.tomcipullo.net](http://www.tomcipullo.net)  
The official website of the composer provides his biography, a works list, a performance calendar and a list of recordings.

This co-production of WSKG and Tri-Cities Opera aired on PBS as a behind the scenes look of TCO’s 2017 production of *Glory Denied*. The program includes rehearsal footage and interviews with the cast, crew and composer.
La bohème by Giacomo Puccini, 1858 – 1924

CD / DVD
Are these items checked out? Not to worry, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Main (Oakland) owns 11 other CD versions and 3 additional visual presentations of the opera!

CD  La bohème, Decca, 1999.
    Gheorghiu, Scano, Alagna, Keenlyside, de Candia, D’Arcangelo; Chailly, Orchestra and Chorus of Teatro alla Scala di Milano
    COMPACT DISC Op Puc 17087

    Freni, Harwood, Pavarotti, Panerai, Maffeo, Ghiaurov; Karajan, Chorus of the Deutschen Oper Berlin, Berlin Philharmonic
    COMPACT DISC Op Puc 8492

    Netrebko, Cabell, Villazón, George von Bergen/Boaz Daniel, Adrian Eröd/Stéphane Degout, Vitalij Kowaljow; de Billy, Symphony Orchestra and Chorus des Bayerischen Rundfunks
    (DVD) M1500.P97 B5 2009x

    Scotto, Niska, Pavarotti, Wixell, Monk, Plishka; Levine, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus
    (DVD) M1500.P97 B5 2005x

Libretto

Includes side-by-side Italian and English translation and a synopsis of the opera.
ML49.P75 W42
La bohème by Giacomo Puccini, 1858 – 1924

For further reading


Arnesen’s book, an intriguing work, brings a fresh view of Puccini to the table. She draws comparisons between Puccini and Wagner, even calling Puccini’s operas a Rose Cycle contrasting with Wagner’s Ring. In the chapter about *La bohème*, the author describes the character of Mimi as the Rose—a woman devoted entirely to love who is symbolized in this opera by her beloved rose bonnet, a substitute for the flower that represents undying love. Arnesen also illuminates the differences between the characters in Murger’s novel and Puccini’s opera.

ML410.P89 A66 2009


Berger’s treatment is a companion piece to his works about Verdi and Wagner. His writing style is witty and educational. He writes a compelling biography of the composer and a detailed account of *La bohème* with commentary about the plot and musical elements. His chapter about film music places Puccini firmly in popular culture, perhaps most memorably in the movie *Moonstruck*. A great read for the Puccini fan.

ML410.P89 B46 2005


Budden, most known for his treatment of the operas of Verdi, seems equally at home with Verdi’s fellow countryman. A brief biography gives way to in-depth analyses of all of Puccini’s operas. In the chapter on *La bohème*, Budden describes the opera’s creation, which was quite a bumpy ride. The members of the creative team were often at odds with one another, as illustrated by excerpts from various letters quoted by Budden. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the opera’s musical motifs.

ML410.P89 B83 2002


Osborne is the “go-to” man if you want detailed treatments of opera composers. He has also written books about the works of Mozart, Richard Strauss, Verdi, and Wagner. Osborne’s discussion of *La bohème* begins with an account of how the work was created and premiered. The middle section discusses the plot and characters and includes an excerpt from Henri Murger’s novel, *Scènes de la vie de Bohème*, that became the inspiration for the final act of Puccini’s opera. (Murger’s work was in fact the source material for the whole opera.) The last section outlines the work’s musical motifs. An informative work.

ML410.P89 O8 1982x
Don Pasquale by Gaetano Donizetti, 1797 – 1848

CD / DVD
Are these items checked out? Not to worry, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Main (Oakland) owns 3 other CD versions of the opera!

Bacquier, Hendricks, Canonici, Quilico; Ferro, Orchestre de l'Opéra de Lyon, Chœurs de l'Opéra de Lyon
COMPACT DISC Op Don 34358

Gramm, Sills, Kraus, Titus; Caldwell, London Symphony Orchestra, Ambrosian Opera Chorus
COMPACT DISC Op Don 34382

Corbelli, de Niese, Shrader, Borchev; Mazzola, London Philharmonic Orchestra, The Glyndebourne Chorus
(DVD) M1500.D68 D5 2014x

Del Carlo, Netrebko, Polenzani, Kwiecien; Levine, The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus
(DVD) M1500.D68 D5 2011x

Libretto:

q ML48.I83 2000, vol. 2
**Don Pasquale** by Gaetano Donizetti, 1797 – 1848

For further reading:

William Ashbrook and Julian Budden share their knowledge of Donizetti’s life and work in one of the chapters. Musical examples are given and a works list is included.
ML390.N45 1983x

Osborne’s overview of *Don Pasquale* provides information about the thematic structure of the opera and its enthusiastic reception by audiences of Donizetti’s time. The opera continues to be one of Donizetti’s most performed works. Some interesting facts: Donizetti claims to have written the whole opera in eleven days (!), and Richard Strauss’ opera *Die schweigsame Frau* and *Don Pasquale* are based upon the same source material, Ben Jonson’s play, *Epicoene or the Silent Woman*.
ML390.O82 1994

Weinstock’s work is the first full-length Donizetti biography in English. Told in chronological order, the book introduces the composer’s life and the culture of nineteenth century Europe through excerpts from Donizetti’s letters and other archival documents.
ML410.D7 W4
Explore more about opera online!

Oxford Music Online
This resource combines the content of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, and *The Oxford Companion to Music* in one place. A valid Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh card is required. This link will get you there: carnegielibrary.org/research (Type Oxford Music into the keyword search box to get to the database.)

Operabase
operabase.com/index.cgi?lang=en
This website allows you to search opera performance details of several international opera companies, including upcoming schedules. You can also find information on past performances of over 39,000 operas (from August 2017 onward), biographies of specific singers, and websites of international opera houses.

OperaGlass
opera.stanford.edu/
A great resource for plot synopses of operas, libretti, discographies, and performance histories. Links to other opera websites are also listed.

YouTube
youtube.com
Though YouTube is not a specific site for opera research, it offers a wide range of video and sound clips. If you use the titles of any of this season’s operas in a search, you will find several archived performances from stage productions, concerts, and more.

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