Study Guide

Faust

by

Charles Gounod
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Visit our web site (http://www.toledopera.org/events/main/aida/) for information about the vocal artists who are playing the characters in Toledo Opera’s production of Faust. Read about the Conductor, the Stage Director and other aspects of the production.
Plot Synopsis*

FAUST

Act I
Faust has spent a lifetime in the study of science. Disillusioned with life, he resolves to poison himself. He curses God and calls on the Devil. Méphistophélès obligingly appears and offers Faust riches, power, or glory. Faust, however, only wants to recapture the innocence of youth. Méphistophélès agrees to Faust’s request, but there are conditions: on earth Faust will be master, but in the world below their roles will be reversed. When Faust hesitates, Méphistophélès conjures up a vision of Marguerite. Faust signs the contract and returns to his youth.

Act II
Valentin and Wagner are going off to war with the other soldiers, and Valentin is concerned about leaving his sister Marguerite unprotected. Wagner starts a song to cheer everyone up, but is interrupted by Méphistophélès. Méphistophélès tells fortunes: Wagner, it seems, will be killed in his first battle. The flowers that Siébel picks will wither, and Valentin will meet his death at the hands of someone close to Méphistophélès. Dissatisfied with the wine on offer, Méphistophélès conjures up a better vintage to toast Marguerite. This angers Valentin and both draw their swords. Valentin strikes out and his blade shatters. Everyone is convinced they are in the presence of the Devil. Méphistophélès leads Faust to a place where couples are dancing. Faust sees Marguerite and offers her his arm. She refuses, but so charmingly that he is left more entranced than before.

Act III
Siébel gathers flowers for Marguerite outside her house. As Méphistophélès predicted, they wither, but holy water seems to restore them. Méphistophélès and Faust have been watching, and Méphistophélès leaves a box of jewels for Marguerite. The atmosphere of innocence surrounding Marguerite’s home moves Faust. Marguerite finds the jewels and puts them on. When she looks in the mirror, she sees a different woman and is further confused by the encouragement of her neighbour, Marthe. Faust and Méphistophélès return, and Méphistophélès flirts with Marthe, giving Faust the opportunity to seduce Marguerite. She begins to give in. Méphistophélès conjures up a garden and makes Marthe run off before disappearing himself. Marguerite realizes she loves Faust and they make love.

Seduced and abandoned, Marguerite is expecting Faust’s child. She is still in love with him and prays for him and their unborn child. The soldiers return with Valentin. Siébel tries to stop him seeing Marguerite but Valentin, suspecting the worst, pushes him aside. Outside her house, Méphistophélès serenades Marguerite on Faust’s behalf. Valentin and Faust fight and, with the intervention of Méphistophélès, Valentin is fatally wounded. Marguerite watches her brother die and hears him curse her with his last breath.

Distraught, Marguerite goes to church to pray for forgiveness. When she hears the voice of Méphistophélès telling her that she is damned, she collapses in terror.

With Méphistophélès’s help, Faust goes to the prison in an attempt to save Marguerite. She seems to recognize her lover and recalls the night when he first seduced her. Faust is overwhelmed with pity. Marguerite panics at the sight of the Devil and, with a frantic appeal to heaven, she dies. Méphistophélès damn her but angelic voices proclaim she is saved.

Reprinted courtesy of the English National Opera
*Visit our web site (http://www.toledopera.org/events/main/aida/) for an expanded plot synopsis.
Charles Gounod and Faust

Seventy years ago, Charles Gounod’s opera Faust was the singularly most popular opera in the world. Many of the great sopranos, tenors and basses made their careers through success in the roles that inhabit the opera, and many an opera company facing dire financial straits turned things around by canceling an announced opera and throwing Faust on the stage! Suddenly, however, tastes changed. Around 1950 Faust seemed hopelessly old-fashioned, the tunes trite and stale, the story outdated. The opera almost disappeared from the repertory until recently, and it seems that the opera (like many seemingly outdated 19th century works) is undergoing a renewed interest by singers, impresarios and audiences around the world.

Charles-François Gounod was the son of a painter and a pianist, and like many other composers he showed great musical promise early. Later in life he recalled seeing Mozart’s Don Giovanni as a child with his mother: “The first notes of the overture with the solemn and majestic chords out of the Commendatore’s final scene seemed to lift me into a new world. I was chilled by a sensation of actual terror; but when I heard the terrible thundering roll of ascending and descending scales, stern and implacable as a death warrant, I was seized with such shuddering fear that my head fell on my mother’s shoulder, and trembling in the dual embrace of beauty and of horror, I could only murmur—‘Oh mother, what music! This is real music indeed!’ This quote is indicative of two things: it is yet another proof that Don Giovanni was considered the most romantic (read Gothic, awe-filled, a repository of horror) of all operas at the time; and Gounod’s eventual operatic meditation on evil and the eternal struggle between God, man and the devil was an unconscious desire waiting to be made into theatrical reality.

At the age of 16 Gounod devoted himself to musical study with Anton Reicha and the operatic composer Fromental Halévy, composer of the opera La juive. As a result of these studies, at the age of 20, he won the coveted Prix de Rome, at the time France’s premiere prize for musical composition. A residency in Italy came with the prize and it was there that he discovered Goethe’s Faust, carrying a copy of it everywhere he went. He even began to consider the idea of a Faust opera during this time, jotting down musical sketches for it. When he returned to Paris he saw Michel Carré’s play Faust et Marguerite which impressed him and rekindled his interest in someday composing a Faust opera.

Gounod was an extremely religious man, for a time even considering the priesthood and entering the seminary at St. Sulpice in Paris. But he abandoned this vocation in favor of a career in opera. In 1848 he came under the influence of one of the great singers of all time, mezzo soprano Pauline Viardot, daughter of the eminent voice teacher Manuel Garcia and sister to Maria Malibran. Viardot had made her career singing in the operas of Gluck and Meyerbeer, and at this time was quickly becoming the most popular singer at the Paris Opéra. Using her star power she was able to help launch the careers of Jules Massenet, Gabriel Fauré and Gounod, whose first opera, Sapho, was written at her behest. This opera was enough of a success for the director of the Opéra to commission another work, La nonne sanglante. This however disappeared after 11 performances. Another work, Ivan the Terrible, was withdrawn before completion because its story centered on a conspiracy against the czar and coincidentally there had been an assassination attempt against Louis Napoleon at the Opéra in 1858. Around this time he was introduced to the librettist Jules Barbier who had written a Faust libretto and who’d even offered it to Meyerbeer.
But the older composer wasn’t interested in trifling with a great German masterpiece, and so Gounod jumped at it.

Leon Carvalho, the director of the Théâtre Lyrique showed interest in the project and brought in Carré, from whose play the opera was further adapted (the play dealt only with Part One of Goethe’s original, thereby limiting its vast philosophical spread). Then another disappointment: a rival theatre was planning a huge entertainment based on the Faust legend at the same time the Lyrique was to open Gounod’s opera. In the meantime, Gounod wrote a comic opera for the Lyrique, *Le médecin malgré lui* which was very well received. After its success, the director of the Lyrique was bold enough to go forward with *Faust*, and it finally had its premiere in March, 1859 in the form of an opéra comique with spoken dialogue.

The rehearsal period for *Faust* was difficult, made more so by the casting of Carvalho’s wife Marie Caroline in the soprano role of Marguerite (despite Gounod’s own rather negative feelings about her voice). She eventually had something of a success in the role despite her tinkering with her part to show off her virtuosity. The tenor lost his voice and had to be replaced by Joseph-Théodore-Désiré-Barbot. The scene in the church at the finale was almost replaced at the last moment out of sensitivity to the Vatican and church authorities, but Gounod appealed to his friend the Papal Nuncio to France and the scene was retained. Librettist Barbier was so nervous about possible comparisons between the opera and Goethe’s original verse-play that he took to his bed and even missed the premiere.

At first, audiences didn’t quite know what to make of the piece even though most critical reviews praised it. Despite that, it had considerable success with 57 performances in that season. The major music publishers rejected it, leaving it to a small, little-known firm owned by Antoine Choudens who went to great lengths to market the piece. Performances were first arranged in the provinces, and then in Germany; the operatic audiences of the day soon warmed up to Gounod’s style and within a year *Faust* was one of the most popular operas in the repertory. As a result, Monsieur Choudens was well on his way to being the head of an extremely important music publishing house, one that is still active today and that achieved its solid financial basis by being savvy enough to back a relatively unknown operatic composer who had not yet had any significant success.

Gounod began to be seen as a significant composer on the Parisian scene, even though he continued to meet failure in the opera house. His most immediate success was certainly the opera *Romeo and Juliet* which appeared in 1867 and seemed to solidify his reputation. But following this he had one unsuccessful theatrical venture after another and finally abandoned opera altogether for the last 12 years of his life. Grove’s Dictionary of Opera tells us that “Gounod’s reputation declined precipitously even before he died: what gave the appearance of ‘depth’ in the Second Empire no longer did by the 1890s”. But what he did leave us, even if we only count *Faust* and *Romeo*, was a bridge between the works of Meyerbeer (who dominated French opera for the first half of the 19th century) and Massenet through whose music we in the 21st century are beginning to look at French opera with renewed interest.

*Reprinted courtesy of San Diego Opera Education and Outreach Program: Operapaedia*
The Source of Faust

Gounod’s source was, of course, the epic verse play of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1747-1832) as well as the myriad versions of what was essentially a classic tale of a man’s pact with the devil in order to achieve riches, power or sublime pleasure.

To simply call Goethe a ‘poet’ is to do disservice to his ample activity in many other pursuits, as a dramatist, author of novels, diplomat, administrator, teacher, musician, scientist, even as an artist. His body of work had a significant impact on European thought and culture, especially Faust and the novel Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (The Sorrows of the Young Werther), which was somewhat autobiographical. Werther had such an impact that young men throughout Europe identified with the hero by not only wearing similar outfits described in the novel but by attempting (or in some cases, successfully committing) suicide. The book was banned in some areas of Germany for this unfortunate turn of events and young men who were obsessed with the novel were said to be under the influence of “Werther-fieber” or “Werther-fever (in 1974 the “Werther effect” was identified as a term to be used to describe copycat suicides and suicide clusters which occur following the suicide of a celebrity). Werther was an important addition to the Sturm und Drang style of literature popular at the end of the 18th century, in which strong emotions against the constraints of rationalism and Enlightenment were given free rein.

Goethe’s magnum opus took him a total of 58 years to write, with Part I being published in 1808. Part II appeared posthumously in 1832. The basic story comes from legend and myth that was fabricated based on the life of an actual person, Georg Helmstetter, who attended the University of Heidelberg in the late 15th century. He eventually fashioned himself as Doctor Faustus, wandering Europe as an astrologer, magician and philosopher. Even Martin Luther was familiar with him, telling stories of Faust’s pact with the devil. An actual biography of Dr. Faustus appeared in 1562 (Manlius) and Johann Spies’ book Historia von D. Johann Faustus appeared in 1587. The Spies book was a runaway best seller and was translated into numerous languages. Christopher Marlowe’s The Tragical Historie of Doctor Faustus brought the story to literature and the stage. In London it was first performed at the Rose Theatre in 1594. After educated people began to turn away from legend and myth to explain natural phenomena in the 18th century, Faust became a favorite subject of puppet plays and comical farces. It was left to Goethe to revive the tale as a metaphor for the human struggle for an understanding of good and evil. The libretto of Gounod’s opera, devised by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, follows Part I of the poem.

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The Music of *Faust*

It should be remembered when discussing the music of Gounod’s *Faust* that it was first presented with spoken dialogue. It can, therefore, be best understood as a ‘number’ opera with fixed, self-contained musical pieces that were made less conspicuous by the composer’s providing music for the spoken recitatives for the Strasbourg premiere in 1860. *Faust* is still considered something of a collection of arias and ensembles that can easily be lifted out of the score and performed on their own: Marguerite’s Jewel Song, Faust’s *cavatine*, “Salut, demeure et chaste pure”, Siebel’s “Faites-lui mes aveux”, Valentin’s “Avant de quitter” and Mephistopheles’ “Le veau d’or” and “Vous que faites l’endormie”, all of which appear in the standard singers’ anthologies. Add to these the choral and instrumental pieces that can also stand independently from theatrical presentation, the Soldiers’ Chorus, the waltz from the Kermesse scene and movements from the ballet.

Gounod was an inheritor of the style of Meyerbeer which had dominated the French opera scene at mid-century but he added to it a gift for melody untouched by any other of his compatriots at the time, at least until Massenet. Marks of his style are elegance, a ‘quiet’ rhythmic motor, lush and brilliant orchestration, not too many harmonic surprises and a gift for theatricality. His music actually parallels all of the hallmarks of the arts active at the time of the Second Empire: grandiosity, sinewy line, an emphasis on brilliant color, a monumental sense of scale and occasionally an overwrought sense of the decorative.

Contrary to the opinion of some, Gounod was not a “Wagnerite” in any true sense. He disdained Wagner’s “endless melody” while at the same time admiring what he thought to be “true” and “beautiful” in his works (see a translation of an interview with Gounod on the subject in the archives of the New York Times, May 25, 1884). More importantly there is no real sense of motivic development in his operas, something that truly marks Wagner as unique.

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About Opera

What is Opera?

Opera is a theatrical drama or comedy told in music through powerful, unamplified voices. Opera combines several art forms—vocal and instrumental music, theater, drama, visual art and often dance—into one complete theatrical experience. When successfully produced, an opera’s directing, singing, acting, stage setting, lighting, conducting and orchestral playing will create an unforgettable spectacle that can move audiences to tears or elation—or both. This powerful appeal made opera the most prestigious and lucrative genre for composers to write in for more than two hundred years. The most famous operas performed today come from the period between the composers George Frideric Handel (whose first opera was written around 1705) and Richard Strauss (whose final opera was premiered in 1942). Opera continues to be a prestigious and popular genre for composers to write in, and many new operas are performed every year.

The Basic Elements of Opera

Singing Is The Primary Method Of Expression.

The most defining aspect of opera is that the majority of lines are sung instead of spoken. The characters express their thoughts and feeling in song rather than speech. Because it usually takes longer to sing something than to say it, however, the action may sometimes seem slower than in a play. Occasionally, even in an opera, characters may speak rather than sing, but the vast majority of lines will be sung.

Opera Combines Many Different Art Forms.

Much of the excitement of opera comes from its use of multiple art forms. Opera combines singing, acting, orchestral music, poetry, dance, mime, theatrical scenery, costumes and lighting in a unique art form all its own. The word "opera" itself is an Italian word derived from the Latin word "opus," which means work (as in work of art).

An Opera Tells A Story.

As in a play, opera is performed on a stage with scenery, props and lighting, by actors wearing costumes, make-up and wigs to create a specific character, time, and place. While the actors sing their lines they are accompanied by a piano, small instrumental ensemble, or even a full orchestra, that may be either to the side of the stage or beneath the stage in the orchestra “pit.” Opera stories come from many different sources: mythology, the Bible, fairy tales, literary classics and history. Operas may be about mythological gods, historic heroes, royalty, or ordinary people from the past or present. The words sung in an opera are written down in a libretto (Italian for "little book"). The libretto is sometimes sung in a language other than English, depending on the nationality of the composer and librettist (the author of the libretto).
A synopsis, which is a summary of what happens in the story, may be read before attending an opera. The libretto and synopsis of most famous operas can be found in libraries; recordings on compact disc and DVD are also available. A synopsis is also usually provided in the printed program at a live performance; English translations of characters’ lines are often projected on a screen over the stage so that the audience can easily follow the story.

The Music In An Opera Reflects The Mood And Events In The Story.

The addition of music to telling a story tends to greatly increase the emotional intensity of a performance. Even if you cannot understand the words being sung, the music provides many clues. It reflects a character's feelings; it hints at a turn in the plot; it may even describe an event (a storm, for example). If something sad or frightening is about to happen, you may hear a warning in the music before the action takes place.

An Opera Is Structured Like A Play.

Most operas begin with an overture, which is an introductory piece of instrumental music that often presents musical themes heard in the opera. As in a play, an opera is divided into one or more acts and various scenes that contain a mixture of arias (one singer), duets (two singers), ensembles (more than two singers, such as trios, quartets, etc.), scenes with a chorus, and sung dialogue called recitative.

The Creative Team

Many people work together to create an opera production. Members of the creative team include the singers, the conductor, the stage director, and the designers (sets, lighting, costumes, wig and make-up). These careers often involve many years of study and hard work to master.

The Conductor

The conductor communicates information about the music and the timing of the show to the singers on the stage and to the orchestra through the gestures he or she makes, often using a baton. The conductor is usually addressed using the Italian term as “Maestro” or “Maestra.” The conductor trains for his/her work just like the singers. He or she must have a broad knowledge of singing, the orchestra, and music in general. The orchestral score, with approximately twenty staves (individual lines) of music, must be studied and mastered long before rehearsals even begin. The conductor uses the score as a guide as he or she coaches the singers and the orchestra toward a performance.

The Stage Director

An operatic stage director faces all the challenges of a theatrical stage director, plus a few special concerns. The opera must be staged to obtain the greatest emotional effect by moving the singers about with a natural flow that enhances the meaning of the story without interfering with the music. The composer has built the framework within which the stage
director must work. Entrances, duets, fights, exits, shipwrecks, and all other stage “business” must take place within a specified number of measures or beats. Action must be compressed or extended as written by the composer. Like a conductor, a stage director must be completely familiar with the musical score. He or she must know Italian, French, German, or whatever language is being sung, as well as have a working knowledge of everything and everyone both on stage and backstage. He or she is also often the person working with the designers to make sure everything on stage is a cohesive whole.

The Designers

Every element the audience sees on stage (the sets, the costumes, the lights, the wigs and make-up) requires a person with special skills to plan and implement how that element is going to enhance the story of the opera. Set designers create sets that transport the audience to a different time and place, and that remain light enough to move around during scene changes and small enough to store in the theaters “wings” (space off to the side of the stage, out of the audience’s view). Costume designers must make each character unique through what they wear. Lighting designers take a theater that is normally completely dark and use electric light and color to create different settings (night vs. day) and moods (energized, spooky, etc.), and to draw the audience’s attention to different characters or locations on stage. Wig and Make-up designers can adjust an actor’s age, hairstyle, add distinguishing marks like scars and tattoos, and help further tailor the unique impression each character’s appearance makes on the audience.

The Process of Producing an Opera

The process of producing an opera begins years before the audience arrives to enjoy it. The head of an opera company sits down with the company’s artistic director and decides what operas they’d like to produce for a given year, or season. They consider what operas they’ve recently produced, what operas their audience would most like to see, and operas that might be new or less familiar but that they feel are excellent. They then decide on the artistic team that will produce each opera and begin hiring designers, a stage director, and singers, renting sets and costumes, and coordinating schedules with the theater.

Singers are often hired to sing a role a year or more in advance and, in the world of professional opera, must have their roles memorized before the first rehearsal. If the role is new to them they need to not only learn all their notes but also all the words to their role, often in a foreign language. In addition, singers must learn the parts of the singers and orchestra around them so they’ll know how those elements relate to their own role. Voice teachers help singers with their vocal technique and vocal coaches help them with language, musical style, and character development. Coaches also play the orchestra score on the piano so singers can learn their parts in the context of the whole. Singers are always in the process of learning new roles so that they
can work in many places, including other countries. This advanced preparation is crucial because there is rarely much time to rehearse once the cast, conductor, and director are assembled.

The design team is made up of a set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, and wig and make-up designer. Their job begins well-before the rehearsal process when they choose a look, a style, and a flow for the production with the stage director. They then work with the opera company to build or rent the sets, wigs, and costumes.

The cast of an opera isn’t assembled until approximately three weeks before the opening night. The singers, who are often chosen by audition, come from around the country and sometimes the world and may not have met each other before the first rehearsal. The conductor leads them through the music with piano accompaniment, showing them his or her interpretation of tempo and phrasing. The stage director shows them where and when and how to move around the stage and how to interpret the drama. This collaboration of conductor and stage director with the singers brings the opera’s plot and music to life.

The opera is staged in a rehearsal room first, using tape on the floor to let the singers know where sets and stairs will be. It moves to the theater’s stage just a few nights before opening. It is then that the orchestra is brought into the process, along with the technical aspects of theater such as lights, costumes, sets, and make-up. Technically and logistically, the opera usually comes together in just five days.

Once in the theater, a stage manager runs rehearsals. Although invisible to the audience, the stage manager is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the stage crew who work backstage (including props people, lighting people, stage hands, costumers, electricians, carpenters, and more), the singers (helping them time entrances, costume changes, and breaks), and conductor (letting him or her know when everything is ready to begin). Video and audio monitors make it possible to see the conductor and hear the orchestra throughout the backstage areas of the theater, and the stage manager can communicate with the singers in their dressing rooms using a PA system. Everyone must be in the right place, at the right time, in the right costume, holding the right prop through many changes and throughout a long drama that cannot stop once it’s begun.

Given that most operas are around three-hours long, in a foreign language, performed entirely from memory, and involve the coordination of many people and art forms, it is a truly incredible feat that they can be performed with only a few weeks of rehearsal and a few days of work in the theater. It takes a team of extremely skilled, very hard working people for opera to be successful.
The Operatic Voice

Many believe the beautiful, flexible, large voice required for opera is something a person is born with, while others believe that the voice is a skill which results from training. The truth lies somewhere in between. Voices that can fulfill the demands required by an opera have several things in common. First, a strong physical technique is needed to allow the singer to sustain long phrases through the control of their breathing. Second, the voice must maintain a resonance in both the head and the chest cavities, amplifying its sound. Although each singer’s voice is unique, voices can be categorized into general voice types. These voice types are only generalities and overlap each other. The notes that are high for a baritone to sing are low for a tenor. The notes that are low for a baritone to sing are high for a bass. As a result, you may see a high-range mezzo-soprano singing a soprano’s role or a low-range baritone singing a bass’ role.

Operatic Voice Types

**Soprano:** The highest female voice, similar to a flute in range and tone color. Usually plays the heroine in the opera since the high voice can powerfully project above the orchestra’s sound.

**Mezzo-Soprano:** The middle-range female voice, similar to an oboe in range and tone color. Called an alto in choral arrangements, this voice can play a wide variety of characters including the part of a young man (trouser role).

**Contralto:** The lowest and least common female voice, similar to an English horn in range and tone color. Not frequent in opera.

**Tenor:** The highest male voice, similar to a trumpet in range, tone color and acoustical “ring.” Usually plays the hero or the romantic lead in the opera.

**Baritone:** The middle-range male voice, similar to a French horn in tone color. Often plays the leader of mischief in comic opera or the villain in tragic opera.

**Bass:** The lowest male voice, similar to a trombone or bassoon in tone color. Usually portrays old, wise men, or foolish, comic men.

*The following terms can be used to describe special characteristics in a vocal range:*

**Coloratura:** A light, bright voice that has the ability to sing many notes quickly, usually with an extended upper range.

**Lyric:** A light to medium weight voice, often singing beautiful sweeping melodies.

**Dramatic:** Dark, heavy and powerful voice, capable of sustained and forceful singing.
Student/Class Activities

Before the Performance

Opera is in essence a story told in music. Combining story and music in a performance makes opera a powerful, often emotional, experience for those in the audience. Before going to the opera, you may want to read about the story, the characters and the cast and production team members. You may want to find out more about Faust’s famous composer, Charles Gounod. However, once the curtain goes up in the theater, we encourage you to enjoy and “soak up” all that is happening on stage.

After the Performance

Grades 6-8

• Compare your experience with this professionally-produced opera to other theater or music performances that you have experienced. What was different? How do you think those differences impacted your response to the performance?
  o ODE*: Music: Grade 8: 4RE: Express how music performance and settings affect audience response.

  • Create your own review of the opera, commenting on aspects such as the story, the music, the performances of principal vocal artists and the chorus, the role of the orchestra, and the visual elements of scenery, costumes and lighting. The Blade newspaper will publish a review of Toledo Opera’s Faust in the Saturday, April 26th issue, both online (The Blade.com) and in print. On what points do you agree and or disagree with the reviewer?
    o ODE: Drama/Theater: Grade 8: 1PR: Compare and contrast personal opinions about a dramatic or theatrical work with those of a professional critic.

  • Who are the primary characters in the opera? What are the personal conflicts or problems between them? What do the characters do that exacerbate or help resolve these problems? Are any of the conflicts resolved in the end? Could Faust, in particular, have avoided his fate?
    o ODE: Drama/Theatre: Grade 7: 1CE: Consider and discuss the consequences of a character’s actions in a drama production.
    o ODE: Drama/Theatre: Grade 8: 1CE: Analyze and discuss the conflicts and emotions of the characters in a selected dramatic work.

  • Faust was originally set in mid-19th-century Germany. Our production updates the opera to the 20th century in America. Do you think this change in the time and place of the opera significantly changes it? Do you think the change is a good or bad choice? Why?
    o ODE: Drama/Theater: Grade 6: 3RE: Explain how changes in a production concept (such as time period or modernization) would alter the presentation of a work.
Grades 9-12

- The plot of Faust has been described as a classic tale of good vs. evil. Would you describe it that way? If yes, what makes this story interesting and exciting? How does it compare to other stories about good vs. evil that you’ve read or seen?
  - ODE: Drama/Theatre: Level I: 2RE Evaluate variations of universal themes and characters across different time periods and cultures and explain how they were used in selected dramatic works.

- Create your own review of the opera, commenting on aspects such as the story, the music, the performances of principal vocal artists and the chorus, the role of the orchestra, and the visual elements of scenery, costumes and lighting. The Blade newspaper will publish a review of Toledo Opera’s Faust in the Saturday, April 26th issue, both online (The Blade.com) and in print. On what points do you agree and or disagree with the reviewer?
  - ODE: Drama/Theatre: Level III: 5RE: Compare and contrast personal and professional criticism of a specific dramatic performance.

*Ohio Department of Education Standard*