• **Plot summary** for each (a few paragraphs with major plot points for each opera) *in your own words*
  
• Important **Characters** and their **voice type (fach)**
  
• **Important arias and ensembles** for each character (the ones we discussed in class)
  
• This assignment will be worth 15 points

• You may use your text, the power point, and other outside sources for this assignment

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**Le Nozze di Figaro**

*Le Nozze di Figaro* is an opera centralized around the idea of romantic infidelity and men’s disloyalty towards their wives with a twist to it. Count Almaviva wants to have sexual relations with Susanna, Figaro’s wife-to-be and his maid. Count sings in baritone while Figaro sings in bass-baritone and Susanna sings in soprano. Countess Almaviva, who is also a soprano, wants her husband to simply love her again, although she does not want him to cheat on her. As a result of this, she teams up with Figaro and Susanna to plot a plan to catch the Count in his act. Supporting characters in this opera include Marcellina, who is a mezzo-soprano, Cherubino (a pants-role singing in mezzo-soprano), Don Basilio, a music master and tenor, Antonio, a gardener and bass-baritone, and Barbarina, Antonio’s daughter and a soprano.

The opera opens with Figaro and Susanna planning and designing their new room, which Susanna worries is too close to the Count’s room. Figaro becomes upset when Susanna tells him the Count has been making sexual movements on her, which causes him to sing the aria, “Se vuol ballare.” Countess, feeling as if her husband no longer loves her, decides to go to Susanna and Figaro for assistance in catching the Count red-handed in his manipulative plot. They happily accept the offer, which is set in stone when Susanna and Countess sing a duet together (Sull’aria...che soave zeffiretto). It is very easy to see how much The Countess wants her husband back, which is revealed through her “Dove sono” aria. In the play, Cherubino, the page, is on the side of Susanna, Figaro, and the Countess. “He” is played as a teenage boy going through the troubles of puberty and is often faced with conflicts of developing into a man. His
aria “Non so piu cosa son” reflects his conflicts of “burning, then turning to ice.” In addition, he sings “Voi che sapete,” an aria about love and asking if he possesses the ability to love. In the opera, Susanna and the Countess must hide their scheme from the Count, which they must go through great lengths to do (including Cherubino’s defenestration). However, as the opera continues and Figaro and Susanna’s wedding comes closer, the Count listens in on Susanna’s aria (“Giunse alfin il momento…de vieni non tadar”) and is utterly convinced that the song was about him. As a result, when he goes to the garden, he is met with the Countess in her clothing which prompts him to apologize in the ensemble “Gente, gente, all’armi, questo giorni di tormenti.” This ensemble contains a great amount of singing as it contains the Count’s rage, his sorrow, and a happy conclusion. Of course, Mozart is reputable for providing the audience with a happy conclusion, which is why this opera ends with everyone singing in sync.

*Don Giovanni*

Don Giovanni is another opera centralized around male infidelity/power abuse and their disability to respect others. The setting is a 17th century Spanish village with Don Giovanni (baritone) as the main character. Other characters include Leporello (Giovanni’s assistant whose voice type is bass), Donna Anna and Donna Elvira (soprano), Don Ottavio (Donna Anna’s fiancé and tenor), the Commendatore (Anna’s father who died at the hand of Giovanni that sings as a bass), Masetto (a male peasant and bass), and Zerlina (a female peasant engaged to Masetto) whose voice type is soprano.

The opera opens with an overture predicting Giovanni’s fate (that Mozart wrote the night before!) and Donna Anna rushes to her father chased by Don Giovanni, who wants to rape her.
The Commendatore and Giovanni duel and Don Giovanni kills the Commendatore. Donna Anna is heartbroken by this occurrence and seeks revenge with her fiancé, Don Ottavio. In the duet “Fuggi, crudele,” Ottavio declares that he will avenge her father’s death and that he will play her husband and father now. While this is occurring, Donna Elvira, a woman who Giovanni has betrayed, is heartbroken. Leporello, Giovanni’s assistant, “comforts” her in the aria “Madamina il catalogo e questo.” Leporello is unaware of how evil Don Giovanni actually is, which makes him a buffo character. He is completely unaware and numb to what is truly occurring. Because of this, he is completely unchanged after naming the amount of women Giovanni has seduced. Meanwhile, Elvira is heartbroken!

As the wedding for Zerlina and Masetto is about to occur, Giovanni offers to marry Zerlina and tells her he wants to flee away with her! Together, they sing the duet “La ci darem la mano,” which she gives in to. When Masetto hears about this, he threatens to call off the wedding, although Zerlina begs for Masetto’s hand back. She sings in irony and in a jokingly manner. They sing the duet “Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.” As a result, Masetto gives in. In the Act I Finale, Giovanni tries to seduce Zerlina again, but is shut down as all the other play characters shut him away. This occurs in the song “Riposate vezzose ragazzette.” Still not giving up, Don Giovanni sings another aria to Zerlina, “Deh vieni alla finestra,” which is a serenade. Meanwhile, Don Ottavio continues to elaborate on his promise to kill Don Giovanni and asks her to marry him. Still full of sorrows, Donna Anna rejects the offer as she sings “Crudele? ah no, mio bene!” which disheartens Ottavio.

When Don Giovanni and Leporello meet at the Commendatore statue in the cemetery, the statue comes to life and tells Giovanni that he will no longer laugh come next morning. At that instant, Don Giovanni forces Leporello to invite Commendatore to dinner that night. That night,
the Commendatore arrives at dinner and sentences Giovanni to burn in Hell. At that moment, Giovanni is burned in flames and falls towards Hell. After, an ensemble of all the characters occurs to acknowledge a final resolution and that everything is now good.

*Cosi Fan Tutte*

Unlike the previous two operas, Cosi Fan Tutte is an opera about gender stereotypes, although it still contains tricks, disguises, and manipulation. There are many important characters in this opera, including Fiordiligi, a soprano, Dorabella, who sings in mezzo-soprano, Guglielmo, a baritone, and Ferrando, a tenor. Guglielmo is Fiordiligi’s lover and Guglielmo is Dorabella’s lover. In addition to these four characters, there is Despina (soprano), Dorabella and Fiordiligi’s maid, and Don Alfonso, an old philosopher that sings in a bass-baritone.

In this opera, there are the two couples, Guglielmo and Fiordiligi, and Ferrando and Dorabella. The plot develops when Don Alfonso proposes a wager to them to test their lovers’ faithfulness. Both Guglielmo and Ferrando tell their wives they are going off to war and then disguise themselves, trying to seduce each other’s partners. When their husbands go “off to war” Dorabella and Fiordiligi sing “Soave sia il vento” to depict their sorrow towards their losses. In addition, Dorabella sings the aria “Smanie implacibili.” Fiordiligi also sings an aria (“Come scoglio immoto resta”) about how she will remain loyal to her husband that she loves so much, which is ironic because she gave in to Ferrando’s seduction in “fra gli amlessi in pochi istanti”!

Despina, the maid, gives them a lecture about love in her aria “In uomini, in Soldati” where she classifies men as fickle breezes and only loving when they want to. She also recommends that they should love just for fun and vanity, which they find strange by their facial features.
Eventually, Guglielmo and Dorabella run off together in love and, stung by his lover’s faithlessness, Ferrando gets Fiordiligi to give in as he tells her they are right for each other. Wondering what to do, the two men ask Alfonso, who tells them that they are to marry their new women. As the marriage is about to occur, a voice proclaims that the two men are now home from war. When Ferrando and Guglielmo arrive, they accuse their wives of cheating on them and ultimately, in the end, everyone is left unhappy! Don Alfonso won the last laugh and he was happy with the ending.

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