

Madam Butterfly

The Brescia Version

Music by **Giacomo Puccini** • Libretto by **Giuseppe Giacosa** and **Luigi Illica**

English Translation by **R.H. Elkin**; revised by **Jay Lesenger**

Performance Saturday, July 5 at 8:15 p.m.

Opera in Two Acts

After the book by John Luther Long and the play by David Belasco

Premiere Performance Teatro alla Scala, Milan, February 17, 1904

Recent Chautauqua Opera Performances 1998, 2005

Chautauqua Opera dedicates this production of Puccini's *Madam Butterfly* to the memory of Julius Rudel (1921-2014). Maestro Rudel was Music Director of the Chautauqua Opera Company in 1958. In 1959, he was named Artistic Director. His tenure as head of the company was short, one year, but his influence was enormous, encouraging the performance of more new American operas and musicals. In 2004, Maestro Rudel returned to Chautauqua for the first time in almost 45 years to conduct our Young Artists in concert. From 1957 to 1979, he was General Director of The New York City Opera where he helped foster the careers of José Carreras, Plácido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, Beverly Sills, and later, a young budding stage director, Jay Lesenger. I will be eternally grateful for the education and opportunities he gave me during my City Opera years. This one is for you, Maestro.

CAST (in order of appearance)

Lt. B.F. Pinkerton, of the U.S. Naval Ship "Abraham Lincoln"
Scott Quinn+

Goro, a nakodo (Marriage Broker)
Jesse Darden*

Suzuki, Cio-Cio-San's servant
Renée Tatum**

Mr. Sharpless, the U.S. Consul in Nagasaki
Michael Chioldi

Cio-Cio-San, a geisha known as Madam Butterfly
Mary Dunleavy+

Cio-Cio-San's Relatives:

Uncle Yakuside
Brian James Myer*

Her Mother
Caitlin Bolden*

Her Aunt
Helena Brown*

Her Cousin
Cheyanne Coss*

The Cousin's Son
Hayden Heid+

The Imperial Commissioner
Brandon Coleman*

The Official Registrar
Jesus Vicente Murillo*

The Bonze, a Shinto priest and Cio-Cio-San's Uncle
Brad Walker*

Prince Yamadori, a wealthy businessman
Jared A. Guest*

"Sorrow", Cio-Cio-San's baby
Madeleine Williams+

Kate Pinkerton, Pinkerton's American wife
Kate Farrar*

Geishas

Cree Carrico*
Nicole Haslett*
Rebekah Howell*

Rachael Kim*
Clara Nieman*
Elizabeth Tredent*

Relatives

Chautauqua Opera Young Artists

Servants

Stephanie Dawson
Sammy Huh

Ralph G. Walton M.D.
Logan Webber

+ Chautauqua Opera Debut

* 2014 Chautauqua Opera Young Artist

** Former Chautauqua Opera Young Artist

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION

Conductor

Arthur Fagen

Conceived/Directed by

Jay Lesenger

Chorus Master

Carol Rausch

Set Designer

Ron Kadri

Lighting Designer

Michael Baumgarten

Costume Designer

B. G. FitzGerald

Wig/Makeup Designer

Martha Ruskai

Coach/Accompanists

Dorothy Randall
Jamison Livsey

Diction Coach/ Supertitles

Allison Voth

Technical Director

Stephen M. Bush

Properties Master

Mary Houston

Production Stage Manager

Teri Jo Fuson

Assistant Stage Director

Cara Consilvio

Assistant Stage Managers

Amber Lewandowski
Kerry Concannon

Concertmaster

Vahn Armstrong



Arthur Fagen



Mary Dunleavy



Scott Quinn



Renée Tatum



Michael Chioldi



Jesse Darden

SYNOPSIS

Place: The terrace and interior of a rented house overlooking the Bay of Nagasaki, Japan

Time: ACT I: Spring, the early 1900s, **ACT II:** Spring, three years later

Act I

Seeking diversion during his tour of duty in Japan, Lt. Pinkerton has arranged with Goro, a marriage broker, for a temporary companion. Goro has obliged by providing a secluded house, servants, a beautiful young geisha named Cio-Cio-San, a traditional wedding ceremony, and a convenient contract which stipulates that the marriage is renewable by the husband on a monthly basis.

After inspecting the house, Pinkerton is greeted by Sharpless, the American consul. The groom marvels at the insubstantial nature of his Japanese wedding. When Sharpless warns him that the bride may not take her vows so lightly, Pinkerton brushes aside any reservations and looks forward to the day when he will take an American as his true wife.

Cio-Cio-San and her relatives arrive, including her drunken Uncle Yakuside. Pinkerton is smitten by his young bride. In a private moment, she shows him the few belongings she has brought with her, including the dagger with which her dishonored father had committed suicide upon the command of the Emperor. She also reveals that she has converted to Christianity in order to please him, a fact that she has fearfully kept from her family. The wedding ceremony is interrupted by her uncle the Bonze, a Shinto priest. Revealing the betrayal of her religion and her ancestors, he orders the family to renounce her and the shaken bride is left alone. Pinkerton comforts his new wife with words of love.

Act II

Three years pass, during which time Cio-Cio-San patiently awaits her husband’s return. Her only companion is her faithful servant, Suzuki. The Consul arrives bearing a letter from Pinkerton, but the overjoyed Butterfly interrupts and misinterprets its contents. Goro brings in Prince Yamadori with yet another offer of marriage. As a good “American” wife, Cio-Cio-San will have only one husband, and she rejects him. Sharpless suggests that Pinkerton might never return and the distraught geisha proudly brings in their baby, “Sorrow.” Butterfly assures the Consul that when Pinkerton hears of his son, he will surely return, and she will rename the child “Joy.” Unable to tell her that Pinkerton has remarried, the Consul leaves her. Suzuki accuses Goro of spreading rumors questioning the baby’s parentage and he is banished from the house. Just at the moment of greatest doubt, a cannon announces the arrival of Pinkerton’s ship in the harbor. As the sun sets, Butterfly and Suzuki prepare the house for his return and begin their vigil.

As the dawn arrives, the exhausted Butterfly puts the baby to bed. Sharpless arrives with Pinkerton and his new wife Kate, who have come to ask to take the child back to America. Suzuki instantly understands the situation. Pinkerton is overcome by self-recrimination and leaves. Cio-Cio-San searches for Pinkerton, but finds Kate instead. Realizing who the stranger is, Butterfly promises to give the child to Pinkerton if he will come in person. Left alone, she finds the only honorable solution to her plight.

— Jay Lesenger, Stage Director

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

A look back at a look forward...

Madam Butterfly: The Brescia Version

The premiere of *Madam Butterfly* at La Scala on February 17, 1904, was one of those famous disasters that fill the books of operatic lore. This historic fiasco clearly had less to do with the opera itself and more to do with the anti-Puccini forces at work in the audience that night. Puccini was successful enough to have enemies who wished to ensure the failure of the composer’s creation. Tito Ricordi, Puccini’s publisher, later wrote, “The performance in the auditorium seemed just as carefully organized as that on stage.” Ironically, most of the music with which modern audiences are familiar appeared in the La Scala version.

When Puccini saw the London production of David Belasco’s popular stage adaption, even though Puccini spoke little English, he was extremely moved by the plight of its fragile heroine. Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, Puccini’s librettists, fashioned a text based on the successful short story by John Luther Long. It was a strong indictment of the treatment of the fragile and naïve Butterfly by the imperialistic Pinkerton.

Puccini had been so sure of his new opera’s success that he was devastated by the catcalls and whistling during the premiere and by the negative reviews which followed. Determined to save his beloved geisha from oblivion, the composer immediately withdrew the score after the premiere. So began a series of revisions which changed the nature of *Madam Butterfly* from a darkly original music drama to a beautiful, but conventional, piece of operatic theatre.

These are the four versions with the composer’s major dramatic changes:

La Scala – This opening night version was performed in two acts. Act I contained extended exposition for Cio-Cio-San’s family at the wedding and a long drunk scene for Uncle Yakuside. Lt. Pinkerton was clearly depicted as the “ugly american,” a very untypical tenor anti-hero. Kate Pinkerton had an extended scene with Cio-Cio-San. This version had only one performance.

Brescia – Puccini’s first revision opened three months later (May 1904). The principal melody of Cio-Cio-San’s entrance was revised. A number of deletions were made in the Act I wedding scene. Act II was divided into two shorter acts. Pinkerton received an aria of remorse to make him more sympathetic. The opera was an unqualified success and a vocal score was published.

Washington – (October 1906) For *Butterfly*’s first performances in English, some further cuts were made, mostly small ones. The English translation was made by R.H. Elkin. Puccini seemed pleased with this “final” version. This version is still available in the Kalmus vocal score.

Paris – (December 1906) More cuts were made in the wedding scene. Pinkerton’s caustic references to the Japanese were eliminated. Many of Cio-Cio-San’s dramatically telling lines, including references to the possibly temporary nature of her marriage, were excised and new, less ironic text was given to her Act II aria “Che tua madre.” Kate Pinkerton’s part was almost completely cut and many of her lines were reassigned to Sharpless. This is the version performed in most opera houses today.

Though Puccini was pleased with his work and assured of Butterfly’s success after the Washington version, the general manager of the Paris Opera was able to convince him that what was most original and unconventional about the earlier versions of the opera would never be acceptable to the conservative Parisian audience. Could the fact that the general manager’s wife was singing the title role have had a bearing on these decisions? Above all, Puccini was practical and did not want to risk another failure. So what had started out as daring and unconventional, especially in the characterizations of its protagonists and the social message it put forth, became more predictable, sentimental, and less complex.

I have felt for a long time now that something was missing dramatically in the “traditional” version of Butterfly. It seemed hard to believe that Puccini would have completely ignored the tone and bite of the original materials upon which he based his opera. In the past few years, more and more productions are using bits and pieces of material from the earlier scores of *Madam Butterfly*. By performing the Brescia version, we get a clearer look at the unedited intentions of Butterfly’s composer. In order to be faithful to Puccini’s original plan, we are returning to his earliest two-act structure. In this light, Cio-Cio-San seems less a victim, and more a tragic figure – a strong branch which, incapable of bending in the storm, must surely break.

— Jay Lesenger, Stage Director

CHAUTAUQUA OPERA ORCHESTRA

Violins I	Violas
Vahn Armstrong	Thomas Dumm, <i>Principal</i>
<i>Concertmaster</i>	Connie Lorber, <i>Assistant</i>
David Hult	Jennifer Stahl
<i>Assistant Concertmaster</i>	Eva Stern
Erica Robinson	Jessie Goebel
Cheryl Bintz	Caroline Code
Matus Zelmanovich	Cellos
Lenelle Morse	Jolyon Pegis, <i>Principal</i>
Marian Tanau	Gena Taylor, <i>Assistant</i>
Ming Gao	Marie Shmorhun
Amanda Armstrong	Batia Lieberman
Karen Galvin	Jeffrey Szabo
Violins II	Si-Cheng Liu
Diane Bruce, <i>Principal</i>	Basses
Simone Lapointe, <i>Assistant</i>	Patricia Dougherty, <i>Principal</i>
Mary Whitaker	Bernard Lieberman, <i>Assistant</i>
Barbara Berg	David Rosi
Cynthia Berginc	Caitlyn Kamminga
Margaret Cooper	
Lara Sipols	
Heidi Brodwin	

Flutes	Trumpets
Richard Sherman, <i>Principal</i>	Charles Berginc, <i>Principal</i>
Emma Moon, <i>Assistant</i>	Peter Lindblom, <i>Assistant</i>
Kathryn Levy (Piccolo)	Leslie Linn
Oboes	Trombones
Jan Eberle, <i>Principal</i>	John Marcellus, <i>Principal</i>
Joan Wright, <i>Assistant</i>	Vern Kagarice, <i>Assistant</i>
Jason Weintraub (English Horn)	Eric Lindblom
Clarinets	Tuba
Eli Eban, <i>Principal</i>	Frederick Boyd, <i>Principal</i>
Jerome Simas, <i>Assistant</i>	
Bass Clarinet	Timpani
Daniel Spitzer, <i>Principal</i>	Brian Kushmaul, <i>Principal</i>
Bassoons	Percussion
Andrew Cuneo, <i>Principal</i>	Thomas Blanchard, <i>Principal</i>
Stephen Smith, <i>Assistant</i>	Ronald Barnett, <i>Assistant</i>
Horns	Harp
Donna Dolson, <i>Principal</i>	Beth Robinson, <i>Principal</i>
William Bernatis, <i>Assistant</i>	
Charles Waddell	
Mark Robbins	

CREDITS

English translation by R.H. Elkin, revised by Jay Lesenger

Scenery constructed by Atlantic Studios Inc., Newark, NJ and Local #266 I.A.T.S.E.

Lighting provided by Advanced Production Group

Costumes for *Madam Butterfly* provided by Malabar Ltd., Toronto, Canada

Wigs provided by Martha Ruskai

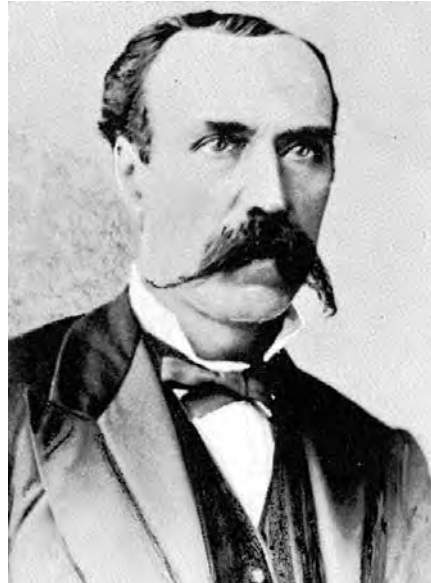
The following people and organizations were instrumental in reconstructing the orchestrations of the Brescia version of *Madam Butterfly*: Maestros Peter Leonard, David Lawton, Carol Crawford, William Fred Scott, Peter Clogg, Lionel Friend and Arthur Fagen; N.J. Opera Festival, Charlotte Opera, and Opera Omaha.

Herbal cigarettes will be used onstage during this performance.



Elizabeth "Baby" McCourt Doe Tabor

THE TABOR TRIANGLE



Horace Tabor



Augusta Pierce Tabor

History sings in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*

When Horace Tabor, the "Silver King of Colorado," leaves his wife for the petite blonde, Elizabeth 'Baby' Doe, the resulting scandal costs him a seat in the U.S. Senate and makes headlines across the U.S. Soon after, Tabor loses everything in the Panic of 1893. Would 'Baby' stand by him even though his fortune had failed?

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Photos Courtesy of History Colorado

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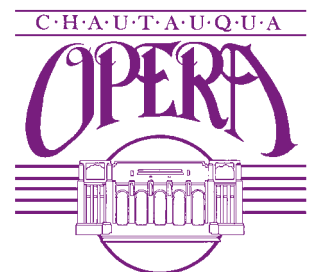
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