

DAPHNE

An Opera in One Act by Richard Strauss

Libretto by Joseph Gregor

STUDY GUIDE



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Welcome to Pacific Opera Victoria!

This Study Guide has been created primarily to assist teachers in preparing students for their visit to the opera. It is our hope that teachers will be able to add this to the existing curriculum in order to expand students' understanding of opera, literature, history, and the fine arts.

Materials in the Study Guide may be copied and distributed to students. Some students may wish to go over the information at home if there is not enough time to discuss in class. The opera experience can be made more meaningful and enjoyable when students have the opportunity to learn about the opera before they attend the performance.

For more information about the history of opera, including a glossary of opera terms, please see other Study Guides on the Pacific Opera Victoria web site at http://www.pov.bc.ca/involve_education.html.

Please Note: The Dress Rehearsal is the last opportunity the singers will have on stage to work with the orchestra before Opening Night. Since vocal demands are so great on opera singers, some singers choose not to sing in full voice during the Dress Rehearsal in order to preserve their vocal chords and avoid unnecessary strain.

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Audience Etiquette

The following list of *Dos* and *Do Nots* will help you (and those around you) enjoy the experience of a night at the opera:

- **Do** dress in whatever you find comfortable. However, going to the opera is a great opportunity to dress up in fancy or formal clothes.
- **Do** be on time. Latecomers will be seated only at suitable breaks – often not until **intermission**.
- **Do** find your seat with the help of your teacher or an usher. It is also customary to remove your hat in respect to the artists and to the person sitting behind you.
- **Do** turn off cell phones, pagers, digital watch alarms and all electronic devices.
- **Do Not** take photos. The flash can be very disturbing to the artists.
- **Do Not** chew gum, eat, drink, or talk. Let the action on stage surround you. As an audience member, you are a very important part of the process taking place. Without you there is no show.
- **Do** get settled and comfortable before the performance begins. Read your programme before the performance; rustling through the programme during the show can disrupt everyone.
- **Do** clap as the lights are dimmed and the **conductor** appears and bows to the audience. Watch as the **conductor** then turns to the **orchestra** and takes up his or her **baton** to signal the beginning of the opera.
- **Do** listen to the **prelude** or **overture** before the curtain rises. This is part of the performance and an opportunity to identify common musical themes that may reoccur during the opera.
- **Do** sit still; whisper only when it is absolutely necessary, as a whisper is heard all over the theatre, and **NEVER** (except in an emergency) stand during the performance.
- **Do** applaud (or shout **Bravo!**) at the end of an **aria** or **chorus** piece to signify your enjoyment. The end of a piece can be identified by a pause in the music.
- **Do** laugh when something is funny.
- **Do** read the English **surtitles** projected above the stage to understand the story.
- **Do** listen for subtleties in the music. The **tempo**, volume and complexity of the music and singing often depict the feelings of a character or give a sense of the action. Notice repeated words or phrases; they are usually significant.

Finally, have fun and enjoy the show!

PACIFIC *Opera* VICTORIA

presents

DAPHNE

February 15, 17, 22, 24, 2007, 8 pm
Royal Theatre, Victoria, BC

An Opera in One Act by Richard Strauss
Libretto by Joseph Gregor

First Performance October 15, 1938, Dresden, Germany
Sung in German with English surtitles

This production is generously supported with a gift from Ernle & Elizabeth Chatfield

The performance is approximately 90 minutes long. There is no intermission.

CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Daphne	Sookhyung Park
Leukippos	Kurt Lehmann
Apollo	Anthony Pulgram
Peneios	Brian McIntosh
Gaea	Rebecca Hass
First Shepherd	Peter Barrett
Second Shepherd	Eric Olsen
Third Shepherd	Gabriel Chenier-Demers
Fourth Shepherd	Aaron Durand
First Maid	Emmanuelle Coutu
Second Maid	Kimberley Paulley
Conductor	Timothy Vernon
Director	Wim Trompert
Set and Costume Designer	Leslie Frankish
Lighting Designer	Gerald King
Choreographer	Danette Bell
Resident Stage Manager	Jackie Adamthwaite
Assistant Stage Managers	Steve Barker Connie Hosie
Chorus Master and Répétiteur	Robert Holliston

With the Victoria Symphony and the Pacific Opera Chorus

This production will be recorded by CBC Radio for broadcast on *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*.



Pacific Opera Victoria's February 2007 production of Richard Strauss' *Daphne* is the first staged production of the opera in Canada. It uses an orchestra reduction developed by Timothy Vernon for this production. To mark this historic occasion, CBC Radio Two will record the production for national broadcast on *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*, allowing the entire country to share in this noteworthy Canadian premiere.

Synopsis of *Daphne*

As the opera opens, sunset is approaching. The shepherds welcome the end of the day, and prepare for the evening's feast – a night of eating, drinking, and dancing to celebrate the blooming grapevines and Dionysus, the god of wine; it is *the great wedding of all of Nature, the time of mating*.

As the shepherds gather their flocks and bid farewell to the day, Daphne enters, begging the day not to end. She sings *O bleib, geliebter Tag! (Oh stay, beloved day!)* and expresses her love for the sun and light and the natural world. She finds the human world foreign, clumsy, destructive to the natural world. She would rather stay with her "brothers and sisters" the trees and flowers. Affectionately embracing a tree, she sings,

*Beloved tree, ...
When the day takes its leave of me,
The sun, Apollo, the great god proudly enters his home on Olympus,
I look to you –
... and you sing to me of the brilliant sun
whose warmth you silently receive all day long,
firmly rooted in the earth's embrace...
singing a mightier song than that of men,
O beloved tree*

Leukippos leaps out from behind the tree, startling Daphne. Joking that he was the tree she was singing to, he tells her he loves her, reminding her of their childhood friendship and the times he charmed her by playing his flute. He says, *Are gods only to be found in trees, fountains, blossoms – and not also in me?*

Daphne tells him that what she loved was the reflection of the natural world in him: she saw the loveliness of flowers on his cheek and heard the song of the wind and the silvery music of fountains when he played his flute. And when his eyes filled with tears, she saw reflected in them her own sorrows. Leukippos breaks his flute, and, telling Daphne he loves her, embraces her. She pulls away, insisting she wants only his friendship.

As the despondent Leukippos leaves, Daphne's mother, Gaea, asks her to come home and get ready for the festival. Gaea tells Daphne that she is worried about the way she sent Leukippos away. She warns Daphne that one day she must accept the will of the gods and turn to human love. Daphne, dreading the festival, refuses to put on the clothing her mother presents to her.

A group of maidens arrives, and the girls comment on the dress and jewellery that Daphne has discarded. When Leukippos compares himself to the empty dress, the maids tell him they enjoy special access to Daphne and persuade him to dress as a woman in order to be near Daphne at the feast and win her.

Daphne's father, the river god Peneios, looks at the last rays of sun over Mount Olympus and tells the shepherds to prepare a feast to welcome Apollo, who he expects will arrive to sit at his table *laughing as in olden days*.

As lightning flashes, Apollo arrives, disguised as a cattleman who grazes his flocks at the foot of Olympus. He tells a tale to the assembled community: he was just about to settle down for the night with his herd on the other side of the river when the smoke and fragrance from the festive preparations caused the cattle to stampede. Finally, with difficulty he and his herdsman rounded up the animals ... and here he is.

The shepherds and Gaea gently mock Peneios for expecting a god to come to dinner:

*Now see what you envisioned, you endless dreamer!
Look what you lured to your feast: sweating cattle,
panicking cows ... a herdsman like us and a rutting bull!*

Peneios tells Daphne to see to the stranger's needs. When she appears, Apollo comments on Daphne's beauty and calls her Sister. Daphne is flattered, but wonders why she has never seen this particular cattleman before. Then Apollo, dropping heavy hints as to his identity, tells her how he spied her while driving his chariot across the sky and how

*The golden wheels ground to a halt and all distance vanished!...
When, at the end of day I returned, tired,
to my purple dwelling...
a gentle ray broke through, and led me to
the fisherman's house and to your gaze, Daphne!*

Then, to her amazement the stranger recalls her very words from earlier in the evening: *O bleib, geliebter Tag!* (Oh stay, beloved day!)

Overjoyed that someone understands so well her love of the daylight, and who moreover treats her as a brother, Daphne responds with utter trust: *Whoever you are, O mighty one, I would no more run from you than would a pebble flee the gaze of the sun.*

Daphne embraces him, crying *How my heart rejoices, brother!* Apollo's response is anything but brotherly, however; he kisses her, and Daphne pulls away, deeply confused, crying, *but you called yourself, "Brother!" You crept into my dream...*

Apollo retorts

*An end to dreaming! I bring truth!
Listen, beloved, do you hear what they are singing?
Do you know the meaning of the blossoming vines?
Do you dare ignore the call of the love-feast?*

But Daphne is now afraid, finding everything – the feast, Leukippos, the whole world, and, above all, the man in front of her – strange and frightening.

The men and women now come in for the feast, singing in praise of Dionysus: *in his love he blesses us with his blood, this wine!* They eat and dance. Leukippos, disguised as a maiden, offers Daphne a goblet; she drinks, and, after some hesitation, she dances with him.

Furiously jealous, Apollo interrupts the celebrations, saying that Daphne has been deceived and the feast is blasphemy. The shepherds are offended by the arrogant stranger and a fight breaks out. Apollo raises his bow; thunder is heard, the sheep escape, and everyone runs off in terror and confusion, leaving Apollo, Leukippos, and Daphne alone together. Apollo then confronts Leukippos: *And what about you, young man, who craftily entered my godly brother's feast...and would rob me of my beautiful Daphne?*

Leukippos admits who he is and strips off his women's clothes. He proudly proclaims his love for Daphne. Daphne is distraught at having been doubly deceived – by Leukippos and by the man who called himself her brother.

Leukippos now demands that the stranger reveal his identity. In response, Apollo sings his great aria, *Jeden heiligen Morgen:*

*Every blessed morning I grip the reins
and mount the great, golden chariot...
mounting the skies on thundering hooves!*

... Rejoice, you gods! Rejoice, mortals,
and every creature...
for behold, I am the sun!

Daphne is overwhelmed with love and fear – but still refuses to give in to the god’s desire for her. Leukippos taunts and curses Apollo, who then kills the young shepherd with his bow.

Overcome with profound grief and remorse for rejecting Leukippos, Daphne sings to him, offering him everything she ever loved – their childhood happiness, the creatures of the natural world – and she vows to stay by him until she too is called by those who caused his death.

Deeply moved by her sorrow, Apollo begs pardon from Dionysus for taking his place at the feast and for killing Leukippos. He asks Zeus to grant Daphne’s wish to be at one with nature by transforming her into a laurel tree, to serve him, to be honoured forever, and to crown the brows of the best and noblest of men.

In the moonlight, Daphne is transformed into a sacred laurel tree. She greets her brothers the trees, and her brother Apollo. She calls the wind to play in her, the birds to live in her, and humans – friends – to take her as a symbol of undying love. Finally, in the moonlight, her wordless disembodied voice echoes from the branches.

The Background of *Daphne*

The Myth of Daphne

The myth of Daphne is ancient, both as literature and as opera. Various versions of the story of Daphne have been known for more than two millennia. Richard Strauss and his librettist Joseph Gregor took several elements of ancient mythology and put their own spin on them to create the opera *Daphne*.

In the earliest versions of the myth, Daphne is pursued by the god Apollo until her mother the earth goddess comes to her rescue and (in some versions) transforms her into a tree or (in other versions) opens the earth to receive her, and creates the laurel tree to console Apollo.

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* contains probably the best known version of the story, and Strauss’ opera draws heavily from it.

Ovid, whose full name was **Publius Ovidius Naso**, lived from 43 BC to 17 AD. One of the greatest Roman poets, he is best known for his love poems and for the great collection of myths called *Metamorphoses*, an anthology of hundreds of myths which in their turn inspired countless other works of music, art, and literature over the centuries to follow. Among the stories Ovid tells are the tales of Apollo and Daphne, Icarus, Orpheus and Eurydice, Echo and Narcissus, Hercules, King Midas, and Pygmalion.

In Ovid’s telling of the story of Daphne, Apollo (Phoebus) is struck by an arrow from Cupid’s bow, which causes him to fall in love with and pursue Daphne. Daphne, having been struck by an arrow that had the opposite effect, wants nothing to do with men and love. Apollo pursues Daphne, pleading with her to stop and listen to him, but she flees in terror; finally, exhausted, she calls to her father Peneios to save her and is turned into a laurel tree.

Many of the ancient myths were retold by **Thomas Bulfinch** (1796–1867) in his *Mythology*, a comprehensive compilation of legends and myths. Bulfinch’s retelling of the Daphne myth closely follows Ovid’s account.

The character Leukippos does not appear in Ovid’s version of the story of Daphne. However, the myth of Leukippos is told in two other books: *Of the Sorrows of Love* by Parthenius of Nicaea and *Description of Greece* by Pausanias.

Parthenius of Nicaea was a Greek poet, who was brought to Rome in 73 BC as a prisoner of war. He later became the teacher of the poet Virgil (who is famous as the author of the *Aeneid*).

Parthenius' only surviving work is the collection *Erotica Pathemata* (*Of the Sorrows of Love*) – 36 love stories based on Greek literature. His account of the story of Daphne stars Leucippus (Leucippus) and reads as follows:

This is how the story of Daphne, the daughter of Amyclas, is related. She used never to come down into the town, nor consort with the other maidens; but she got together a large pack of hounds and used to hunt, either in Laconia, or sometimes going into the further mountains of the Peloponnese. For this reason she was very dear to Artemis, who gave her the gift of shooting straight. On one occasion she was traversing the country of Elis, and there Leucippus, the son of Oenomaus, fell in love with her; he resolved not to woo her in any common way, but assumed women's clothes, and, in the guise of a maiden, joined her hunt. And it so happened that she very soon became extremely fond of him, nor would she let him quit her side, embracing him and clinging to him at all times. But Apollo was also fired with love for the girl, and it was with feelings of anger and jealousy that he saw Leucippus always with her; he therefore put it into her mind to visit a stream with her attendant maidens, and there to bathe. On their arrival there, they all began to strip; and when they saw that Leucippus was unwilling to follow their example, they tore his clothes from him: but when they thus became aware of the deceit he had practiced and the plot he had devised against them, they all plunged their spears into his body. He, by the will of the gods, disappeared; but Daphne, seeing Apollo advancing upon her, took vigorously to flight; then, as he pursued her, she implored Zeus that she might be translated away from mortal sight, and she is supposed to have become the bay tree which is called daphne after her.

Yet another version of the story of Daphne and Leucippus comes from **Pausanias**, a Greek traveller and geographer of the 2nd century A.D. Pausanias wrote one of the first ever travel guides, the *Description of Greece*, in which he tells of the landscape, history, customs, animals, art, and architecture of the places he visited. The story of Daphne finds a place in his exploration of a region of Greece called Arcadia:

The Ladon is the most lovely river in Greece, and is also famous for the legend of Daphne that the poets tell...

Oenomaus, prince of Pisa, had a son Leucippus. Leucippus fell in love with Daphne, but despaired of winning her to be his wife by an open courtship, as she avoided all the male sex. The following trick occurred to him by which to get her. Leucippus was growing his hair long for the river Alpheius.

Braiding his hair as though he were a maiden, and putting on woman's clothes, he came to Daphne and said that he was a daughter of Oenomaus, and would like to share her hunting. As he was thought to be a maiden, surpassed the other maidens in nobility of birth and skill in hunting, and was besides most assiduous in his attentions, he drew Daphne into a deep friendship.

The poets who sing of Apollo's love for Daphne make an addition to the tale; that Apollo became jealous of Leucippus because of his success in his love. Forthwith Daphne and the other maidens conceived a longing to swim in the Ladon, and stripped Leucippus in spite of his reluctance. Then, seeing that he was no maid, they killed him with their javelins and daggers.

Strauss and Gregor adapted the myth of Daphne to create an opera that tells the story in a unique and moving way. In the opera, Daphne is not chased through the woods by Apollo, as happens in most versions of the story. Nor is it Zeus or Gaea or Peneios who causes Daphne to change into a tree. Instead, Strauss and Gregor show Apollo betraying Daphne's trust. He deceives her by appealing to her innocent desire to be understood, to be part of the world of light and nature. The crisis comes, not when she can no longer run to escape the god who wants to ravish her, but when Apollo kills her old friend Leucippus and, moved by her profound grief, finds a way to keep her by him and give her a kind of immortality through the transformation.

In the myths in which Leukippos appears, he is killed, not by Apollo, but by the maids whom he has deceived; however, Apollos' jealousy is the indirect cause of his death.

Perhaps the most important way in which Strauss and Gregor changed the story of Daphne is the addition of the Dionysian feast, a celebration of mating and fertility, which does not occur in previous versions of the Daphne story. As a result, the opposition between the Apollonian and Dionysian worlds becomes a significant part of the opera. Apollo, the sun god, represents light and reason – in contrast to the irrational Dionysian force of sexuality and intoxication. Daphne is pressured by everyone around her to become part of the Dionysian world of sexuality, to grow up and take part in the mating rituals, but this prospect frightens her.

Other Operas about Daphne

Daphne is not only one of the oldest of stories; it is also one of the oldest libretti in operatic history.

The story of Daphne actually inspired the first opera ever written: *Dafne* by the Italian composer **Jacopo Peri** (1561–1633) and librettist Ottavio Rinuccini. Peri wrote *Dafne* around 1597 in an attempt to re-create classical Greek drama. He was following the example of the Florentine Camerata, a group of intellectuals, artists and musicians in Florence, who believed that music would be improved if it returned to the style used by the ancient Greeks. They believed that ancient Greek drama was sung rather than spoken, and they felt it was important for listeners to be able to understand the words being sung.

When Peri wrote *Dafne*, he used monody (vocal solos with instrumental accompaniment) to express the emotions of the text. This was an important change from previous song styles which used polyphony (two or more tunes being sung at the same time). The words were now clearer and easier to understand. This paved the way for opera, for the increasing importance (and celebrity status) of solo singers, and for two important ways of singing solo operatic text: the speechlike **recitative** and the more songlike **aria**. Both recitative and arias are essential to opera today. Operas usually alternate between recitative (speechlike singing which imitates the rhythms and tones of normal speaking and advances the plot) and arias (songs in which the action stops while characters express their feelings). This is different from musical theatre, in which songs usually alternate with spoken dialogue.

Jacopo Peri's opera *Dafne* is unfortunately lost except for a couple of fragments. However, one of Peri's later works, *Euridice*, dating from 1600 and also inspired by an ancient Greek myth, is the first opera score to have survived to the present day.

The story of Daphne continued to inspire operas through the Baroque period. Another of the very first operas ever written was *La Dafne* by **Marco da Gagliano**, which was first presented in 1608, in Mantua. This opera still survives, although it is rarely performed.

The very first opera in German was also based on the story of the girl who turned into a tree. **Heinrich Schütz** (1585–1672) composed *Dafne* (using a German translation by Martin Opitz of Ottavio Rinuccini's libretto for Peri's *Dafne*) to celebrate a royal wedding in 1627. Alas, like the first *Dafne*, Schütz's opera is now lost.

First performed in 1640, *Gli Amori d'Apollino e di Dafne* (*The Loves of Apollo and Daphne*) was one of some three dozen operas composed by the Italian composer **Pier Francesco Cavalli** (1602 - 1676). The librettist for Cavalli's version of the Daphne myth was Giovanni Francesco Busenello, a Venetian lawyer who was also the librettist for a much more famous opera, Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (*The Coronation of Poppea*).

In 1672 an Italian composer, **Giovanni Andrea Bontempi** (1624 -1705), presented his *Apollo und Dafne* at the court in Dresden (the same city where Strauss' *Daphne* would have its world premiere over 250 years

later). Bontempi was a singer (a castrato), a composer, a music historian, and stage designer of the court theatre. He published books on architecture and Saxon history, but is best known for his 1695 *Historia musica*, the first history of music in Italian.

Yet another Daphne opera, *Dafne in Lauro*, was written by the Austrian composer **Johann Joseph Fux** (1660-1741). Fux is best known for his 1725 textbook on counterpoint, *Gradus ad Parnassum (The Study of Counterpoint)*, which has been used by many of the great composers, including Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. This book, originally written in Latin, has been widely translated and is still available today.

Georg Frideric Handel (1685-1759) composed a dramatic cantata, *Apollo e Dafne* for soprano, bass and orchestra. Composed in Italy around 1709 and finished in Hanover in 1710, *Apollo e Dafne* is a series of profoundly emotional, lyrical recitatives, arias, and duets, in which Apollo expresses his love and Dafne resists; finally she stuns Apollo by turning into a laurel tree. The cantata is also known as *La terra è liberata (The earth is free)*, a title based on Apollo's arrogant opening words as he boasts that he has saved the world by killing the snake Python with his bow and arrow, which are far more powerful than Cupid's puny little weapon:

The earth is liberated! Greece is vindicated! Apollo has won!

After the devastation and terrors that have saddened and decimated our people, Python lies dead by my hand. Apollo has triumphed. Apollo has won!

The well-being of the universe depends on this mighty bow.

A **cantata**, like an **oratorio** and an opera, is a story set to music, with multiple sections such as arias (for solo singers), duets, choruses, and recitatives (speechlike singing), with instrumental accompaniment. Operas are different from cantatas and oratorios because they are staged. In an opera, costumes, sets, and dramatic movement complement and enhance the music. Oratorios and cantatas do not use staging and often are based on religious themes. Cantatas tend to be shorter than oratorios with fewer performers. *Apollo e Dafne* is a little gem of a cantata, full of feeling and lovely melodies.

The Laurel Tree

In Thomas Bulfinch's *Mythology*, Apollo says this when Daphne is turned into a laurel tree:

"Since you cannot be my wife, ... you shall assuredly be my tree. I will wear you for my crown; I will decorate with you my harp and my quiver; and when the great Roman conquerors lead up the triumphal pomp to the Capitol, you shall be woven into wreaths for their brows. And, as eternal youth is mine, you also shall be always green, and your leaf know no decay." The nymph, now changed into a Laurel tree, bowed its head in grateful acknowledgment.

The Laurel tree into which Daphne was transformed is a real plant whose leaves most people have probably encountered in a soup or stew or a batch of pickles.

Its proper name is *Laurus nobilis*; it is also known as Sweet Bay Laurel, True Laurel, Grecian Laurel, Bay Laurel, Sweet Bay, or simply Bay Tree. This is the source of the bay leaves commonly used in cooking soups, stews, and meat dishes. Bay laurel is a pyramid-shaped tree or large shrub with aromatic, evergreen leaves and shiny gray bark; it is native to the southern Mediterranean region where it can reach 60 feet in height. In cultivation it generally is much smaller (perhaps 10 feet tall). It can be grown in gardens in the Victoria area, and is also an excellent container plant.

Just as the god Apollo wore a wreath of laurel leaves in honour of his beloved Daphne, ancient Greeks and Romans honoured kings, conquerors, poets, and winners of athletic and scholarly contests with garlands from the bay laurel tree. Laurel has always symbolized victory and merit, and laurel garlands were presented to the winners at the first Olympic games in 776 BC.

From this custom come the terms "baccalaureate" and "poet laureate." A poet laureate is a poet who is honoured for artistic excellence. Some countries and regional governments appoint a poet laureate – an official poet who is expected to write poems celebrating special occasions or honouring important people.

A baccalaureate (baca lauri, Latin for "laurel berry") is an educational qualification. There are several types of baccalaureates conferred by various countries. One of the most familiar is also called the Bachelor's degree; it is awarded to those who graduate from university.

Laurel leaves had other uses for the Roman emperors, as amusingly recounted by the Roman historian Suetonius in his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*.

Suetonius tells us how Julius Caesar was self-conscious about his baldness: *Therefore he used to comb forward the sparse hair from the crown of his head, and of all the honours decreed to him by senate and people there was none that he received or seized upon more gladly than the right of perpetually wearing a laurel crown.*

Suetonius also notes that the emperor Tiberius (Tiberius Nero Caesar) was extremely afraid of lightning, *and when the sky was in a disturbed state, always wore a laurel crown on his head; because it is supposed that the leaf of that tree is never touched by the lightning.*

The bay has long been believed to protect people against all sorts of evils, including lightning, thunder, witches, and the plague. The medieval herbalist Nicolas Culpepper wrote that *neither witch nor devil, thunder nor lightning will hurt a man where a bay tree is.*

A plant that brings such great blessings also foretells calamity when it dies. The withering of a bay-tree was supposed to be the omen of a death. In *Richard II, Act II, Scene 4*, Shakespeare wrote,

*'Tis thought the king is dead; we will not stay.
The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;*

Rich men look sad and ruffians dance and leap,
The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,
The other to enjoy by rage and war:
These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.

The bay was also reputed to have amazing medicinal power. Culpepper claimed it was effective against *all poison of venomous creatures, and the sting of wasps and bees; as also against the pestilence, or other infectious diseases.* He also recommended it for colds, coughs, migraine, worms, and for ills of *the joints, nerves, arteries, stomach, belly, or womb, ... palsies, convulsions, cramp, aches, tremblings, and numbness in any part, weariness also, and pains that come by sore travelling...* not to mention pains in the ears, bruises, the itch, scabs, and weals in the skin.

Bay leaves are also said to repel bugs, and the essential oil from the leaves and berries is used in perfumes, candles and soaps.

Unfortunately, there is little if any scientific proof for bay's medicinal powers; however it is a useful ingredient in any kitchen and a beautiful plant - with a wonderful story to tell!

Richard Strauss and the Writing of *Daphne*

Strauss began writing the music for *Daphne* in 1936 when he was in his seventies.

He had long been intrigued by ancient Greece and had visited Greece in his youth. He also wrote several operas based on Greek mythology, including *Elektra*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Die ägyptische Helena*, *Die Liebe der Danae*, and, of course, *Daphne*.

By the early 1930's, finding someone to write the words for his operas had become a serious problem for Strauss. His long-time librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who was a great poet and dramatist in his own right and who collaborated with Strauss on some of his greatest hits, notably *Der Rosenkavalier*, had died in 1929. Strauss then turned to Stefan Zweig, who was Jewish, and who fled into exile in 1934 to escape Nazi persecution. Zweig suggested that Strauss take on a more politically acceptable librettist and recommended Joseph Gregor for the job.

An article in *Time Magazine* in July 1938 (just before the premiere of Strauss' opera *Friedenstag*, the predecessor to *Daphne*) says a lot about the challenges Strauss was facing during this time - and about his reputation:

Five years ago when Nazis came to power in Germany, 69-year-old Composer Strauss had ... settled into a highly respected position as musical Germany's No. 1 composer. Friendly at first to the new regime, he accepted an official post as head of the German Reichsmusikkammer (State Chamber of Music). But independent-minded Strauss soon found himself in conflict with Nazi ideas of musical propriety. Nazi authorities regretted that his favorite librettist, von Hofmannsthal, had been a Jew, but agreed to let bygones be bygones if he would abjure Jewish librettists in the future. Promptly Composer Strauss got himself another Jewish librettist, Austrian-born Dramatist Stefan Zweig, and started work on a new opera called Die Schweigsame Frau (The Silent Woman).

It is told that while the opera was being written, Librettist Zweig, worried by Nazi growls, suggested that they call the whole thing off, that Strauss get himself another librettist acceptable to the German authorities. In reply to Librettist Zweig's suggestion, white-haired Strauss wrote a long letter. In it he expressed his contempt for the Nazis, and his hunch that by the time the opera was completed they would be out of power anyhow. The letter was addressed to Zweig in Vienna, but Zweig did not receive it. At the Austrian border, Nazi officials opened the letter and read it. While Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and other prominent Nazi disciplinarians boiled with rage, Composer Strauss went quietly on with his work. But when Die Schweigsame

Frau was finally performed in Dresden, Librettist Zweig's name was absent from the programs, and Nazi critics were hostile. It was immediately dropped from the repertory. Months later, Strauss resigned as head of the Musikkammer. [Note: Strauss was forced to resign from this position on July 6, 1935]

Nazi rage was mollified somewhat when, later the same year, Strauss humbly announced that he had found a new 100% Aryan librettist and was planning an opera on a German historical subject. The librettist: Dr. Joseph Gregor, 50-year-old director of the Theatrical Collection in Vienna's famed National Library. Arrangements were soon made to have Strauss's forthcoming opus premiered at the opening of Munich's world-famed summer opera season. But last week, as the rehearsals were well under way, and the score of the opera was released to the public, war-loving Nazis got another unpleasant surprise. Obstinate Bavarian Strauss and his guaranteed Aryan librettist had concocted an impassioned plea against war. Its title: *Friedenstag* (The Day of Peace).

At this particular time, an opera extolling peace by any other contemporary composer would probably have been quickly verboten by zealous Nazi censors. But Herr Doktor Richard Strauss is not only Germany's No. 1 composer. As one of the two most eminent composers in the world today (the other is Finland's Jean Sibelius), he is Naziland's No. 1 cultural exhibit. Even though he is a bad boy the Third Reich is loath to spank him.

Strauss' new collaboration with his "100% Aryan librettist," Joseph Gregor, was a rocky one. Even after three revisions of the *Daphne* libretto, the composer was not satisfied.

Not surprisingly, the greatest challenge was the end of the opera when Daphne is turned into a tree. Strauss agonized over the question of how to handle the final scene. Plan A, put forward in Gregor's libretto, was to end with a choral hymn to the transformed Daphne tree. As *Daphne* was intended to be part of a double bill with *Friedenstag*, which also had a choral finale, this would, in Gregor's view, make the two operas into a fine matched set.

However, Strauss was not happy with this ending. Without telling Gregor, Strauss consulted the conductor and librettist Clemens Krauss, who said the idea of bringing people on stage to sing to a tree was absurd and suggested that the opera close with Daphne's transformation and the transition of her human language into wordless song.

Strauss then removed the choral finale. In the composer's words, *The miracle of transformation is slowly worked upon her: only with orchestra alone! During the transformation Daphne still speaks, at most a few words, which dissolve into wordless melody! ... at the end ... she sings—as a voice of nature.*

The result is one of the most glorious endings in opera, as the orchestra's radiant harmonies are joined by Daphne's voice, wordless now, no longer human. This gem of an opera has been called *one of Strauss' supreme love letters to the soprano voice.*

Daphne premiered on October 15, 1938, in Dresden, Germany, as part of a double bill with *Friedenstag*. The performance was conducted by Karl Böhm, an important interpreter of Strauss' music, to whom Strauss dedicated the opera. *Daphne* and *Friedenstag* subsequently went their separate ways; they no longer form part of a double bill, and *Friedenstag* in fact is performed even more rarely than *Daphne*.

The Daphne Conundrum

By Robin J. Miller

When Pacific Opera Victoria presents Richard Strauss's *Daphne* this February, it will be the first time it has ever been staged in Canada. In fact, the opera has rarely appeared anywhere in the world since Strauss finished it 70 years ago, in 1937. The New York City Opera finally presented *Daphne* for the first time in 2004; the Metropolitan Opera has never put it on, even though reigning Met soprano Renée Fleming made a magnificent recording of it (with Canadian tenor Michael Schade) in 2005.

Why so few performances of an opera that many opera critics consider to contain some of the most sublime music ever written? Well, there are many theories, not least of which is that the rather odd plot simply puts people off. Of course, most opera plots are odd, but this is the only one to have a sternly chaste (no sex with god or man) title character turning into a tree at the end. It may make for a great Greek myth, but it doesn't quite have the drama of Tosca murdering Scarpia and throwing herself off the battlements, and it is extremely difficult to stage. Alex Ross, music critic of *The New Yorker*, actually decided not to review the New York City Opera production because, as he wrote in his blog, "maybe there is really no way of representing Daphne's transformation onstage: the miraculously beautiful final scene is not simply the mythological rebirth of a nymph as a tree but the composer's own mysterious rebirth in the Germany of the late thirties."

Strauss's life in Nazi Germany is the subject of much debate by music scholars. Some believe that, by choosing to stay in Germany and accepting an appointment from Joseph Goebbels to be the president of the Reich's Music Chamber in 1933, he proved himself to be a Nazi sympathizer. Others point to two facts as evidence that he was simply trying to make the best of a horrible situation. First, that he was forced to resign from his post as head of the Music Chamber just two years later, after neglecting to implement any anti-Semitic policies and writing, in a letter to Jewish novelist and librettist Stefan Zweig that was intercepted by the Gestapo, that he "would have accepted this pestiferous office under any government." And second, that he helped save his Jewish daughter-in-law Alice and her two sons from the death camps where 26 members of her family died, and even drove to Theresienstadt in 1941 to see Alice's grandmother as part of his unsuccessful efforts to free her. (The camp guards told him he was insane and turned him away.)

Whatever Strauss's true political feelings may have been, there is no doubt that this somewhat muddy reputation - combined with the fact that Strauss's late works were considered distinctly old-fashioned at a time when serious music was dominated by 12-tone composition - may also have contributed to *Daphne* languishing, under-performed and under-appreciated, for far too many years. So too might the judgment of the great and influential conductor, Sir Georg Solti, who proclaimed that, after the composer's long-time librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal (who collaborated with Strauss on a string of hits, including *Elektra*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Arabella*) died in 1929, "Strauss lived for another twenty years, but he never again wrote a great work."

It also doesn't help that *Daphne* has two extremely tough tenor roles - the god Apollo and the shepherd Leukippos, who are both captivated but rejected by the young and beautiful Daphne - as well as a killer mezzo-soprano/contralto role in Daphne's mother, the earth-goddess Gaea. She has to hit an almost unbelievably low E-flat below middle C, without sounding like a foghorn.

Fortunately for us, however, others have fought back, including a few brave sopranos who were not afraid to tackle a part that lies extraordinarily high in the voice, requires the soprano to be on stage practically every moment - luckily, the opera is only about 100 minutes long - and demands considerable acting chops to make come alive. After Apollo kills Leukippos and Daphne realizes what she has lost, she must sing a paean

to undying love that believably soars beyond words into wordless rapture as she becomes a laurel tree. “At the end,” said the composer, “she sings as a voice of nature.”

Strauss, too, firmly believed *Daphne* was a great musical accomplishment (although he had considerable reservations about the libretto by theatrical historian and critic Joseph Gregor, which he at one point called “not particularly felicitously imitated Homeric jargon”) – and even his wife, Pauline, who generally preferred Massenet’s music to her husband’s, liked the work. In June 1949, as part of a documentary to mark Strauss’s 85th birthday, a camera crew was sent to the ailing composer’s Bavarian villa to ask whether they could film him playing one of his own works. Strauss agreed, but instead of playing one of his most famous pieces – a tone poem, say, or something from *Rosenkavalier* – he played the transformation scene from *Daphne*. He died three months later.

For a real treat, you can see and hear Strauss playing *Daphne*’s closing scene on the Web – the address is long, but worth it – at: www.richardstrauss.at/html_e/05_bilder/0fs_index.html . Click on “Videos,” then “Composer and Conductor.”

Robin J. Miller is a Victoria-based freelance writer and long-time opera fan.

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Richard Strauss: Conductor and Composer

Richard Strauss (1864 - 1949) is one of the giants of both 19th and 20th century music. Best known now as a composer, Strauss was also one of the leading conductors of his time and the first major composer to record many of his own works. He was particularly devoted to the works of Mozart and Wagner; in fact it was Strauss who rescued Mozart's neglected opera *Così fan Tutte* from obscurity and restored it to the standard repertoire.

Richard Strauss was the son of Franz Joseph Strauss, an irascible but very fine horn player, who gave young Richard a solid grounding in classical music and later, through his professional contacts, provided him with musical experience and opportunity. From his father Richard learned to love Mozart. For a time too he shared his father’s dislike of Richard Wagner (1813-1883), the great composer who had dominated German opera for a generation. However, Wagner’s music became a major influence on Richard Strauss, and although they never met, Strauss eventually became one of the chief interpreters of Wagner’s operas.

While still in his teens, young Richard wrote a considerable amount of music, and some of it, including a symphony, a wind serenade, and a violin concerto, was performed. In 1884, when he was just 20, he made his professional conducting debut. Hans Von Bülow, director of the highly regarded Meiningen Orchestra, invited the young man to conduct his own *Suite for Thirteen Wind Instruments* – but there was no time for rehearsal, and Strauss had never had a conductor’s baton in his hand before.

Twenty-five years later Strauss recalled the experience: *I conducted my piece in a state of slight coma; I can only remember today that I made no blunders. What it was like, apart from that, I could not say. Bülow did not even listen to my début; smoking one cigarette after another he paced furiously up and down the artists’ room.*

Shortly afterward, Strauss was hired as von Bülow’s assistant at Meiningen; within a month, von Bülow quarreled with Johannes Brahms over the interpretation of his Fourth Symphony and resigned from Meiningen; Strauss succeeded him as principal conductor.

Around this time von Bülow gave Strauss the nickname “Richard the Third.” (Richard Wagner was Richard the First, and von Bülow said that after Wagner, there could be no Richard the Second.) Between them, the two Richards dominated German music and German opera for a century.

In 1886 Strauss became Third Conductor at the Munich Opera (this meant there were two more senior conductors who got first dibs on whatever was being performed). Strauss was later appointed to conducting positions with the Weimar Opera House, at Bayreuth (whose world renowned opera house was and still is devoted to the performance of Wagner's operas), at the Berlin Court Opera, and the Vienna State Opera. He also established an international conducting career that took him all over Europe and to North and South America. Strauss' conducting activities allowed him to conduct not only works by Wagner and other composers, but his own compositions.

In 1887 he met Pauline de Ahna, a young soprano, whom he married in 1894. In 1897 their son Franz was born. Pauline was a talented singer and performed in many operas, including those of Wagner and her husband. Strauss considered her the model interpreter of his songs, and he clearly loved her. He wrote some of his finest songs as a wedding gift to her and later portrayed aspects of their life together in the *Symphonia Domestica* and the opera *Intermezzo*.

The librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal was inspired by Pauline to create the character of the Dyer's wife in Strauss' opera *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. With enormous tact, Hofmannsthal explained to Strauss, *It is a magical fairy tale with two men confronting two women, and for one of the women your wife might well, in all discretion, be taken as a model ... she is a bizarre woman with a very beautiful soul, au fond; strange, moody, domineering and yet at the same time likeable.*

The reality was that Pauline may have been a beautiful singer, but she was an extremely difficult woman, sharp-tongued, temperamental, and extremely jealous. Many of Strauss' friends (including Hofmannsthal) disliked her and were mystified that the two stayed together. She complained when he played cards with his friends. She publicly criticized her husband's music – although she did like the finale of *Daphne* and even kissed the conductor Karl Böhm at the premiere.

Strauss himself admitted that Pauline was a driving force in his work and that without her, he would not have accomplished nearly so much. The two wrote each other around 1,500 letters. When Strauss was 79, the 80-year-old Pauline said to the wife of director Rudolf Hartmann, *I would scratch the eyes out of any hussy who was after my Richard.* They lived together 55 years, until Richard's death in 1949. Pauline died eight months later.

The year of Strauss' marriage to Pauline also saw the premiere of his first opera, *Guntram*, for which he wrote both the music and the libretto. It was heavily influenced by Wagner, but was not a success. For a while Strauss wondered whether he was cut out to be an operatic composer, and he turned his attention to writing tone poems (his preferred word for what is also known as a symphonic poem).

A **symphonic poem** or **tone poem** is a piece of orchestral music based on something non-musical, such as a story, poem, or work of art. It is **programmatic music** (music that is intended to evoke images, based on something in the real world) rather than **absolute music** (music for its own sake, which is not intended to suggest anything else).

Strauss' tone poems represent the culmination of the 19th century symphonic poem; among them are *Don Juan*, *Death and Transfiguration*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Don Quixote*, and *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, whose opening fanfare was popularized in the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

As the 20th century began, Strauss focussed more on opera. His first great operatic success was *Salome*, whose macabre and sensual subject matter caused a sensation when it premiered in 1905. Strauss went on to write the equally passionate and dissonant *Elektra*, followed by something completely different – the nostalgic Viennese comedy *Der Rosenkavalier*, which remains his most beloved and popular opera. In all, he wrote 15 operas and over 200 songs.

Strauss' profound musicianship, his devotion to the human voice, and his wry sense of humour are epitomized by his *Ten Golden Rules for Conductors, For the Album of a Young Conductor*, written around 1925. His rules included such pithy gems as these:

Don't sweat while conducting; only the audience should be warm.

Never look encouragingly at the brass, except with a brief glance to give an important cue.

It is not enough that you yourself can hear every word the soloist sings. You should know it by heart anyway. The audience must be able to follow without any difficulty. If they don't understand the words they will go to sleep.

Always accompany a singer so that he can sing without effort.

Perhaps the most important rule was the first: *Remember that you are playing not for your own fun, but to bring joy to your audience.* It is a rule Strauss never forgot, either as a conductor or as a composer.

Strauss' Operas

Opera	Librettist	Place & Date of Premiere
Guntram, Op.25	Richard Strauss	Weimar 1894
Feuersnot, Op.50	Ernst von Wolzogen	Dresden 1901
Salome, Op.54	Oscar Wilde Translated by Hedwig Lachmann	Dresden 1905
Elektra, Op.58	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Dresden 1909
Der Rosenkavalier, Op.59	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Dresden 1911
Ariadne auf Naxos, Op.60	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Vienna 1912
Die Frau ohne Schatten, Op.65	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Vienna 1919
Intermezzo, Op.72	Richard Strauss	Dresden 1924
Die ägyptische Helena, Op.75	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Dresden 1928,
Arabella, Op.79	Hugo von Hofmannsthal	Dresden 1933
Die schweigsame Frau, Op.80	Stefan Zweig	Dresden 1935
Friedenstag, Op.81	Joseph Gregor	Munich 1938
Daphne, Op.82	Joseph Gregor	Dresden 1938
Die Liebe der Danae, Op.83	Joseph Gregor	Salzburg 1952
Capriccio, Op.85	Clemens Krauss / Richard Strauss	Munich 1942

Recordings of *Daphne*

Daphne is rarely performed and even more rarely recorded. The two most readily available recordings are a live 1964 recording conducted by Karl Böhm and a recent 2005 studio recording featuring the renowned soprano Renée Fleming in the title role.

The 1964 Live Recording

Karl Böhm, conductor

Vienna Symphony Orchestra & Vienna State Opera Chorus

Hilde Güden: Daphne

James King: Apollo

Fritz Wunderlich: Leukippos

Vera Little: Gaea

Paul Schöffler: Penneios

Deutsche Grammophon 423 579 [2CDs]

The 2005 Studio Recording

Semyon Bychkov, conductor

West German Radio Chorus & Orchestra

Renée Fleming: Daphne

Johan Botha: Apollo

Michael Schade: Leukippos

Anna Larsson: Gaea

Kwanchul Youn: Peneios

Decca 475 6926 8 DH2 [2CDs]

Strauss dedicated *Daphne* to Karl Böhm, and it was Böhm who conducted the premiere in 1938. Therefore the recording of Böhm conducting a live performance in 1964 at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna has considerable historic interest and provides what might be considered a definitive interpretation, with a superb cast.

James Leonard of *All Music Guide* noted that the 1964 recording features *Hilde Güden heading a stronger cast and Karl Böhm leading a lush orchestra*, but he adds that *listeners of any age will be captivated by Fleming's compelling performance*.

Another review of the Fleming recording notes: *Not only does it fill a major gap in the Strauss discography ... but it does so with immense style and eloquence, revealing Daphne as the most consistently lovely of Strauss' late operas ... Fleming gives one of the most lustrous performances of her career ... she soars through the difficult but glorious vocal writing of this role, one of Strauss' supreme love letters to the soprano voice... one of the finest opera recordings of 2005.*

Scott Paulin of Barnes & Noble

Reviewer Robert Levine comments as follows:

There have been other "modern" recordings of this opera ... both with lighter sopranos in the title role ... and "light" is what Strauss wanted. This is not to say that Renée Fleming is not excellent; I'd just like to go on record as saying that her sound is vaguely too mature ("matronly" would be unkind) for the part. But her singing, inflection, tonal allure, and sensitivity to the text make her performance shine...

Johan Botha's Apollo is note-perfect, which is no mean feat given how high and loud the role is; but he sings with less passion than, say, James King in the same role on DG ... Michael Schade, as Leukippos, is ardent and also copes well with Strauss' sometimes cruel writing – one phrase begins on a high-C; but memories of the ravishing Fritz Wunderlich under Böhm on DG are not erased ... Semyon Bychkov leads a clear, well-paced, if not-quite haunting performance, and the WDR Symphony and Chorus play and sing expertly. The number one choice still may be the DG under Böhm, with Güden an incandescent Daphne, and King and Wunderlich thrilling; but Fleming fans will need this fine set as well.

Resources

Resources on Richard Strauss

<http://www.richardstrauss.at/html/index.html>

Richard Strauss Online: a site presented by Richard and Christian Strauss, grandsons of the composer, with biographical information and discussion of his works and family life.

<http://mynptv.org/musicFeat/composer/cmstrauss.html>

Biography of Strauss and discussion of some of his works.

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,883043,00.html?promoid=googlep>

Text of “Bad Boy,” an article about Richard Strauss that appeared in *Time Magazine* July 25, 1938, just before the premiere of his opera *Friedenstag*.

Alan Jefferson. *The Life and Times of Richard Strauss*. David & Charles, Newton Abbot, 1973.

Michael Kennedy. *Richard Strauss*. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London, 1976.

The Myth of Daphne

<http://etext.virginia.edu/latin/ovid/trans/Ovhome.htm> and

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0028&layout=&query=card%3D%238&loc=1.452>

Translations of the story of Daphne from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

<http://www.theoi.com/Text/Parthenius.html>

Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata (Of the Sorrows of Love)* including the story of Daphne

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Paus.+8.20.1>

The story of Leukippos (Leucippus) in Pausanias' *Description of Greece*.

<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/b/bulfinch/thomas/b93fab/chap3.html>

The Story of Apollo and Daphne, from Bulfinch's *Mythology: The Age of Fable; or Stories of Gods and Heroes*

<http://www.cosmosandlogos.com/category/000051.php>

Discussion of various versions of the myth of Daphne

www.harmoniamundi.com/Publish/document/441/2907348.49E.pdf

Translation of Handel's cantata *Apollo e Dafne*

Activities and Topics for Class Discussion or Writing

1. Creating a Character Sketch

Read the synopsis of *Daphne* or a translation of the libretto (available in the CD recordings of the opera). Create a character sketch for one of the main characters (for example, Daphne, Peneios, Apollo). Consider the following questions:

What can be assumed about this person?

What is the character's relationship with the other characters?

Why does the character make the choices he or she does?

Include evidence from the opera to support your claims.

Include information about the following:

Character's Name

Physical Characteristics (style and physical attributes)

Psychological Characteristics (mental aspects of character, how does he/she think?)

Emotional Characteristics (is he/she generally cheerful, sad, snobbish, "off-balance" etc.?)

Family

Other interesting facts

After seeing the opera, look at your character sketch again. Does any aspect of the performance or the music you heard change your view of the character you have profiled? Why?

Do the emotions conveyed through the music fit the character sketch?

2. Creating a journal from the point of view of a character

Choose a point of conflict for the character you chose for your character sketch, and write a journal of those events from the character's point of view, using the character profile for assistance.

Take on the persona of that character and refer to the character in the first person. Remember to express only information that your character would know

3. Writing a Review of *Daphne*

After seeing the opera, make some notes in point form, answering the following questions:

What did you like about the opera? What did you dislike?

What did you think about the sets, props and costumes?

Would you have done something differently? Why?

What were you expecting? Did it live up to your expectations?

What did you think of the singers' portrayal of their characters?

Discuss your reactions with your fellow students. Feel free to go beyond the questions listed above.

Then begin to outline your review. Keep in mind that a review should contain the following:

A clearly stated purpose (why are you writing this and who is your audience?)

A brief plot synopsis (including who sang what role, etc.)

A coherent series of paragraphs comparing and contrasting things you liked or didn't like

A summary / closing paragraph

Your review should capture the interest of the reader. You might read a few examples of reviews for fine arts events from the newspaper, or have a look at the brief excerpts from reviews of the recordings of *Daphne*, which are in this study guide.

Once your outline has been completed, write your rough draft.

Exchange reviews with other students to critique and edit. Focus on effective and logical expression of ideas and correct grammar and punctuation.

Edit and revise your review until you have a polished final version.

Students might submit their writing for publication such as a school newspaper. Students are also welcome to send the reviews to Pacific Opera. We would love to hear your thoughts!

4. Research and Discussion: Artists and Politics:

Richard Strauss, like many other composers, performers, writers, and artists, found himself in conflict with the ruling government when the Nazis came to power.

Discuss the choices Strauss made and the reasons he made them. Discuss the choices and reactions of other artists during the Nazi regime.

Explore other situations in which artists had to deal with a government they disagreed with. Some examples might include Dmitri Shostakovich's life in Stalinist Russia or, more recently, the controversy and consequences when Natalie Maines, lead vocalist of the Dixie Chicks, criticized US President George W. Bush on the eve of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

5. Research and Discussion: Stories and Uses of Plants

Like the Laurel tree into which Daphne was transformed, many plants are associated with stories and superstitions. And like the Laurel, many plants are useful for a number of things, such as medicine, cosmetics, or food.

Choose a plant or herb and investigate some of the stories behind it and some of the things it is used for. Discuss or write what you learned about the plant you have chosen.

Teacher's Comments

Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated. Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire and return it to the address below. Thank you for your comments and suggestions.

Name: _____ School: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax: _____ Grade(s) you teach: _____

Email: _____ Subjects: _____

Have you attended other arts events with your students in the past year? Yes No

If yes, what were they? _____

Were you able to use the Teacher's Study Guide in your classroom activities before attending the opera?
 Yes No

If not, please elaborate: _____

If so, which sections of the Study Guide did you find most useful?

How appropriate was the information provided in the Study Guide? _____

What would you add/delete?

Did you spend classroom time discussing the performance after your students attended the opera?
 Yes No

Do you have any comments about the performance itself?

Would you like to receive information on our future Student Dress Rehearsals? Yes No

How would you like to receive information? Fax Email Letters Other _____

Further comments and suggestions _____

Please return this form to:

Pacific Opera, 1815 Blanshard Street, Suite 500, Victoria, BC V8T 5A4 Fax: 250.382.4944