MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC STRUCTURE
IN THE FINALES OF THE OPERAS
OF GIACOMO PUCCINI

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
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*****

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1997

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ABSTRACT

Giacomo Puccini is today the most performed Italian opera composer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This study concentrates on the final acts of Puccini’s nine multi-act operas and the final major dramatic divisions of his three one-act works, though in many ways the finales may be seen as case studies for the investigation of Puccini’s operas as wholes. These finales reveal a variety of dramatic and musical effects and compositional methods. Puccini’s use of these procedures allowed him to create powerful operatic endings without becoming stilted or formulaic in his approach.

Puccini’s concern for effective finales can be clearly seen in his obsession with final curtains and his detailed stage directions for the final moments of the operas. His concern for atmosphere is evident in an evocative variety of temporal and geographic settings, and use of offstage voices. His employment of long-range planning across the finales is evident in their high degree of musical and dramatic organization, including the use of entrances and exits as a structural device. Especially important here is Puccini’s use of recalled thematic motives, particularly at the operas’ conclusions, to recall events and evoke emotional reaction. All of the final acts of Puccini’s multi-act operas begin with some type of instrumental prelude—often tonally ambiguous at its outset—that accompanies stage pantomime, and in the final moments of his operas, which might be categorized as "sentimental" or "shocking," he sustains the dramatic action until the very last moment of music.
This study, based on orchestral scores approved directly by the composer and piano-vocal scores prepared with his approval, does not concentrate on any single work but draws examples from across Puccini’s operatic output.
Dedicated to the memory of my father, Fred Anders, and to the future of my children, Lucille Celeste & Martin Price
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I wish to thank my adviser, Lois Rosow, for going beyond the call of duty in her support, encouragement, and enthusiasm for my pursuit of this degree. Her patience, humor, suggestions, and marvelous editing ability in correcting both my stylistic and analytic problems have made this dissertation possible.

I wish to acknowledge the scholarly contributions of Alexander Main, Professor Emeritus of Music, which aided my early research concerning nineteenth-century Italian opera, specifically Puccini. Without his direction at the outset of my study, the present topic would not have been chosen.

I am also grateful to Burdette Green, from the music theory area, and Thomas F. Heck, head music librarian, for serving on my dissertation committee. Prof. Green's global insight, particularly from theoretical and editorial standpoints, has been invaluable in shaping this final document, and his personal guidance during its preparation is greatly appreciated. Prof. Heck's vast knowledge of bibliographic matters has also been noteworthy.

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I wish to acknowledge the love, encouragement, support, and sacrifice that my family and friends have so generously given to me during my long pursuit of this degree, particularly my parents-in-law, Martin & Carol Reno, as well as my brothers-in-law, Phil and John (and his family: Bev, Matthew, and Elizabeth). Also, I must thank Pat & Clara Casey for welcoming me into their home and accepting me as one of their own children.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At the premiere of Giacomo Puccini's 1 La Bohème on February 1, 1896, 2 the critical response was openly hostile, 3 and the audience response only polite; yet, the final scene left the audience "deeply moved." 4 "Mimi's death scene, listened to with the most ardent attention and in the greatest silence, created the [most] favorable impression. The public jumped to its feet in great enthusiasm." 5 At the well-noted Palermo premiere the following April, 6 the end of the opera was received with such unbridled enthusiasm that, although it was past one o'clock in the morning, the public would not leave the theatre and continued to call for encores. Finally, the conductor was forced to repeat the entire last scene of the opera, beginning with Mimi's entrance ("even in Italy a rare occurrence") 7,

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1 Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini (b. Lucca, December 22, 1858; d. Brussels, November 29, 1924).
2 Torino, at the Teatro Regio, Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957) conducting.
3 Carlo Bersezio wrote for La Stampa, "Just as La Bohème fails to leave any very strong impression upon the listener, so it will fail to leave any strong trace in the history of our opera...it will be well for the author to regard it as a momentary error." Rebecca Knaust, The Complete Guide to La Bohème (New York: McAfee Books, 1978), 3.
6 At the Teatro Massimo, Leopoldo Mugnone (1858-1941) conducting.
7 Carner, Puccini, 103.
even though half of the orchestra had already gone and the singers had already changed into their street clothes. "Rodolfo is said to have sung without his wig and Mimi with her hair undone."\(^8\)

While the finale of *La Bohème* is admittedly one of the most riveting final scenes in all of opera,\(^9\) all of Puccini's finales are musically and dramatically extremely powerful. Indeed, the evidence suggests that the composer was deeply concerned with finales. As we shall see, he was obsessed with the exact moment and the speed at which the final curtain should be lowered, and he concluded almost every final act with detailed stage directions. Moreover, Puccini made some type of revision of the final act of almost every opera after its first production and initial publication in order to improve its musical and dramatic effect.\(^10\)

In the following study I hope to demonstrate a number of ways that Puccini's dramatic and musical skills are exhibited in the finales of his operas. While his compositional practices at the beginning of his operas have been highlighted by several scholars, who often point out Puccini's use of a "motivo di prima intenzione"\(^11\) to immediately set the opening moods of his operas, it is perhaps in the finales of the operas that Puccini's compositional skill is most strongly put to test. Indeed, without an effective finale, an opera's beginning becomes almost irrelevant, because it is, after all, the final moments of an opera that must captivate the audience and make the climax of the drama unforgettable.

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\(^8\) *Ibid.*

\(^9\)Carner enthusiastically proclaims, "There are few closing scenes, including the finale of *Traviata*, to equal that of Mimi's death in pathos and the power to move the spectator to compassion." *Ibid.*, 377.

\(^10\)Most of Puccini's revisions involve cuts, in which he attempted to compress the dramatic action and eliminate all unnecessary details. One of the most drastic cuts took place in one of the numerous revisions of *Manon Lescaut* (enumerated in Table 1.1 below), where he completely excised the soprano's final aria ("Sola, perduta abbandonata"), only to reinstate it in his final version of the opera. For more details, see Suzanne Scherr, "Editing Puccini's Operas: the case of *Manon Lescaut*," *Acta Musicologica*, LXII/1 (January-April 1990), 62-81.

The following discussion will encompass a systematic analysis of Puccini's finales with regard to four general areas:

- temporal and geographic settings
- the beginnings of the finales with special attention directed towards their first aural impressions, onstage personages, and initial musical items
- the endings of the finales, concentrating on final curtains, final visual impressions, and final aural impressions
- structural features of the finales related to entrances and exits of characters.

While some of the issues to be considered here are narrowly focused on finales per se, others (e.g., the characteristics of set pieces) have implications for our understanding of Puccini's style in general. In these last cases, the finales become "case studies" for investigating the operas as wholes.

1. Survey of analytical approaches to Puccini's operas

Serious Puccini research was begun around 1958, the centenary of the composer's birth, with the publication of two landmark works. The first was Mosco Carner's *Puccini: A Critical Biography* (1958),\(^{12}\) and it has come to be recognized as the definitive study of the composer. In addition to biographical content, it offers critical commentary on the composer's works in the context of his life, psychoanalytic speculation regarding the composer, many acute observations concerning Puccini's librettists and circumstances of first performances, as well as very fine, though rather general, musical analysis. Almost forty years after its initial edition, Carner's monumental work remains the gauge for Puccini scholarship. The second landmark publication in 1958 was the book-length collection of letters, entitled *Carteggi Pucciniani* and edited by Eugenio Gara.\(^{13}\) This volume contains more than nine hundred items to, from, and about the composer, as well as photographs, and a now-dated discography.

\(^{13}\) Milano: G. Ricordi, 1958.
In the past twenty years or so, a "new wave" of Puccini studies has been advanced both by well-established scholars seeking untapped resources and by younger scholars seeking new fields in which to become established. One of the most vocal of this new breed of Puccini scholars is Allan Atlas, whose several articles are among the first to take a careful look at Puccini’s compositional practice. Taken collectively, his articles tend to deal with large-scale key relationships and with motives and their semantic meanings. His views appear a bit radical to some scholars, e.g., Roger Parker, but are quite stimulating in their approach.

Another prominent Puccini scholar is Roger Parker himself, whose article on the first act of Tosca, in the Cambridge Opera Handbook dedicated to this opera, focuses on "the relationship between words and music, the interaction of tonality and drama, and the function of motif." Mention must also be made of Parker’s collaboration with Arthur Groos for the Cambridge Opera Handbook dedicated to La Bohème, in which these two scholars present articles on the genesis of the opera, its libretto, its autograph score, and its early critical reception. Also included in this La Bohème guide is an enlightening article

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by William Drabkin, entitled "The Musical Language of La Bohème," in which he points out the shortcomings of applying only one type of musical analysis (harmonic, formal, melodic, motivic, and so forth) to Puccini's music.

Puccini's final opera, the incomplete Turandot, has served as a great stimulus to Puccini scholarship. One of the most intriguing studies is Puccini's Turandot: The End of the Great Tradition. William Ashbrook, the current "dean" of Puccini scholars, and Harold Powers delve into Puccini's approach to Turandot's composition, with chapters on Puccini's emphasis on tonal coloring (as opposed to reminiscence motives) for the composition of Turandot, and on his treatment—analyzed according to form, harmony, melody, dramatic structure, and so on—of the two major dialogues for Calaf and Turandot. The authors' thesis is that Turandot is actually a "number opera."

Two other prominent Turandot studies involve the completion of the opera. Jürgen Maehder has exhaustively studied Puccini's compositional drafts and Alfano's completion of the score. Janet Maguire has tried to reconstruct the ending of the opera from Puccini's own sketches.

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Other recent work on Puccini includes studies by Michael Kaye, Gabriele Dotto, Sandra Corse, Deborah Burton, and several others. An annotated bibliography on Puccini is currently being compiled by Linda Fairtile for the "Composer Resource Manuals" series published by Garland.

In addition, the recent wave of Puccini scholarship has produced numerous doctoral dissertations. Helen M. Greenwald's "Dramatic Exposition and Musical Structure in Puccini's Operas" (1991) has been particularly stimulating as a catalyst for the present study. According to her abstract, Greenwald "uses Puccini's first acts and one-act operas as a laboratory sample for the study of tonality, rhythm, vocal discourse, texture, and time as they pertain to the large-scale musical and dramatic organization of his works." She

22The Unknown Puccini: A Historical Perspective on the Songs, including Little-Known Music from "Edgar" and "La Rondine" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) focuses in great detail on Puccini's non-operatic vocal music, primarily the songs.
24"Opera, Four Hands: Collaborative Alterations in Puccini's Fanciulla," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, XLII/3 (Fall 1989), 604-624. Dotto illustrates the differences between the autograph score and the final engraved score of this opera that reflect changes made by Toscanini, in Puccini's absence, during rehearsals for the 1910 premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City.
divides the study into two parts. The first is topical and deals with all of Puccini's operas, while the second examines Acts I and II of *La Bohème* to show how her discussion and methodology may be applied to a single work.²⁹

The methodology of Part I begins with the first event of each opera, literally the beginning, and "grows progressively from a discussion of the opening curtain to consider the structure of the entire first act or one-act opera."³⁰ Greenwald divides Part I into six chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of the operas: "The Opening Curtain," "Rhythm and Meter," "Tonality," "Vocal Discourse: Set Pieces, Character Exposition, and Tradition," "Time and Light," and "Texture and Macrostructure: The Coordination of Elements." The purpose of the "opening curtain" chapter is "to explore broadly Puccini's techniques of beginning an opera by illustrating the individuality of these openings and demonstrating how they relate to one another and to convention."³¹ The chapter divides into three broad sections: "Overtures/Preludes," "Introduzioni," and "Tonal Transitions."³² Chapter Two, "Rhythm and Meter," examines Puccini's rhythmic techniques, "how he propels the openings of his works, defines form and character, and uses rhythm to create atmosphere."³³ It covers four areas: "Opening Motives," "Characterization," "Metrics in the Macrostructure," and "The Dance."³⁴ Greenwald's

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³²"Puccini was extremely sensitive to the dramatic potential of both darkness and silence and was consequently very precise in his instructions for the raising of the curtain. He saved this event for the moment of maximum impact and thereby elevated the status of what might have been otherwise a perfunctory theatrical gesture. In a kind of dramatic polyphony, the curtain raising became an equal partner with the orchestra, chorus, solo voices, pantomime, and even silence." *Ibid.*, 29.
³⁴"As we continue to study Puccini's expositions, his musical and dramatic structures, it becomes increasingly clear that each part of the musical-dramatic structure is, more often than not, not only integrally related to the whole, but is generated out of some seminal gesture or conception. Thus, to say, when studying rhythm, that Puccini's operas are either lively or ebullient, that his rhythms are forceful or incisive, is really not enough. Rather, a closer look reveals the more intimate alignment of metric design with characterization, and, more importantly, with large-scale dramatic conception and musical structure." *Ibid.*, 80.
discussion of tonality (Chapter Three) deals with "Puccini's use of tonal relations to define structure, form, and character."\textsuperscript{35} Beginning with the opening moments of the opera she notes how and when Puccini first establishes a key in each opera and how this relates to the remainder of the exposition ("Opening Tonalities and Large-Scale Key Relations"). After determining the opening tonality of the opera, Greenwald discusses intervallic joints between scenes, Puccini's tendency to establish a tonal sonority for a single character or a pair, and the rather controversial issue of the meaning of some of Puccini's later transpositions as they relate to the large-scale structure.\textsuperscript{36} In the chapter on vocal discourse (Chapter Four), Greenwald discusses how Puccini used traditional vocal forms in both traditional and non-traditional ways, with the main focus being on "the introductory discourse of various characters and how it reflects the individual and relates to traditional operatic structural syntax."\textsuperscript{37} In this chapter, Greenwald sheds light on how Puccini defines recitative, aria, song, and arioso, and how these are incorporated into the introductory sections of his operas.\textsuperscript{38} Chapter Five, on time and light, "is about how Puccini uses time and light to initiate the drama, create ambiance, and define the

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, 84.

\textsuperscript{36}"This discussion of Puccini's use of tonality is by no means comprehensive. My purpose here has been to suggest a method of analysis and illustrate the kinds of things that may be learned through it.... I believe, however, that we can safely conclude...that, in general, Puccini appears to have been very conscious of traditional tonal relationships in his works. There is a sense of clarity at the background level in many of Puccini's expository structures, a series of diatonic relationships that reflect large-scale planning and esteem for the norms of classical harmony and the musical and dramatic relationships they support. The issue becomes more cloudy at the local or foreground level, where tonal and intervallic relationships seem to be more chromatic and less clearly defined, most often in response to a physical action onstage. In such situations we must acknowledge these more pragmatic aspects of opera—that openness and closure are analogous to action and repose and that chromatic and diatonic are akin to kinesis and stasis." \textit{Ibid.}, 124.

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Ibid.}, 128.

\textsuperscript{38}"The developmental course of many of Puccini's characters appears to be closely related to the structural course of his work, the timing and genre of their musical discourse carefully selected to correspond appropriately to the musical and dramatic environment of the individual character. Puccini's strategy was different from that of his operatic predecessors, and perhaps stands outside the "Italian" tradition in this respect, though it is by no means entirely divorced from it. Rather, he considered aria, song, and arioso in terms of their individual traditional musical, dramatic, and structural associations—at least a century's worth of collected meaning—and then made his assignments accordingly, suiting them to character and situation, tipping his hat to convention when appropriate, and melding them efficiently and subtly, but incisively to his individual operatic structures." \textit{Ibid.}, 166.
macrostructure of his first acts and one-act operas." In it, Greenwald discusses the temporal settings of the beginnings of Puccini's operas and how they are depicted in the music. In the final chapter in Part I of her dissertation (Chapter Six), Greenwald introduces "texture" and then summarizes and discusses "the ways in which Puccini coordinated various combinations of musical and dramatic features to articulate the macrostructure of his first acts and one-act operas." For each opera she combines both musical and non-musical dramatic elements in an attempt to define its macrostructure: "tonality, texture, meter, time of day (and season), and entrances or exits of characters." She uses the term "conventional" to "denote sections that are either constituted mainly of set pieces or in which traditional operatic functions or discourse are the rule" and the term "episodic" for "those sections that are constituted mainly of recitative and thus by and large lack such formalities" as set pieces.

In the conclusion to her dissertation, Greenwald raises questions regarding Puccini's conception of the central and final acts of his multi-act operas. She offers some general statements concerning Puccini's use of long-range planning across an entire work, his use of thematic recall, his concern for closing curtains, and so on, but clearly her main concern is the expositions—i.e., beginnings—of the operas. The aim here is to answer Greenwald's query with a study of the final acts of Puccini's multi-act operas, and the final major dramatic divisions of his one-act operas. While Greenwald's approach was centered

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40 "In his outdoor settings, such 'natural' occurrences as nightfall provided Puccini with an event to which he could react musically by changing rhythmic or tonal gears. On the other hand, an indoor setting seemed to inspire Puccini to devise a more subtle visual organization, with light playing less of an overt structural role. And while it is true that Puccini took advantage of established conventions of time and season, he used both their visual manifestations and psychological associations to enrich his scenario, create texture, and reinforce the structure." *Ibid.*, 186-87.
41 *Ibid.*, 188.
43 *Ibid.*, 189. "By concentrating on the very basic elements of musical and dramatic structure—opening gestures, tonality, rhythm, vocal discourse, texture, and time—I hope to have shown that for Puccini 'detail' really meant the intricate coordination of music and drama." *Ibid.*, 209.
around expositions, my approach will center around finales, with a focus on the concluding moments of Puccini's operas. This study will not parallel Greenwald's in every concern.

2. Scores and versions

Both the orchestral and the piano-vocal scores of the twelve operas (see list of operas in Table 1.1) were utilized for the musical analysis reflected in the present study. For all but the two earliest operas the piano-vocal score was the current Italian-English edition supplied by G. Ricordi & Co. to readers in the United States, and for the two exceptions, *Le Villi* and *Edgar*, the current Italian editions were used.

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Le Villi — 1884

Libretto: Ferdinando Fontana (1850-1919)
Source: the short story, Les Willis (1852), by Jean Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1808-90), originally published in the newspaper Le Cabinet de lecture, later published in the collection Contes et nouvelles
1st vers: Opera-Ballo in un atto, as Le Willis, Milano, Teatro dal Verme, May 31, 1884
2nd vers: Opera-Ballo in due atto, 2 acts as Le Villi, Torino, Teatro Regio, December 26, 1884
3rd vers: 2 acts, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, January 24, 1885
4th vers: 2 acts, 1888
5th vers: 2 acts, Hamburg, November 29, 1892

Edgar — 1889

Libretto: Fontana
Source: the five-act play, La Coupe et les lèvres (1832), by Louis Charles Alfred de Musset (1810-1857), part of the collection Un spectacle dans un fauteuil
1st vers: Dramma lirico in quattro atti, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, April 21, 1889
2nd vers: 4 acts, Lucca, Teatro del Giglio, September, 1891
3rd vers: Dramma lirico in tre atti, Ferrara, Teatro Comunale, January 28, 1892
4th vers: 3 acts, Madrid, Teatro Real, March 19, 1892
5th vers: 3 acts, Buenos Aires, Teatro de la Ópera, July 8, 1905

Manon Lescaut — 1893

Libretto: Domenico Oliva (1860-1917), Luigi Illica (1857-1919), Ruggiero Leoncavallo (1858-1919), Marco Praga (1862-1929), Giuseppe Giacosa (1847-1906), Giulio Ricordi (1840-1912), and Puccini\textsuperscript{b}
Source: the novel, L'Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut (1731), the seventh and final volume of Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité, by Abbé (Antoine-François) Prévost d'Exilès (1697-1763)
1st vers: Dramma lirico in quattro atti, Torino, Teatro Regio, February 1, 1893
2nd vers: 4 acts, Hamburg, November 7, 1893
3rd vers: 4 acts, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, February 7, 1894
4th vers: 4 acts, Nice, Casino, Opéra of Nice, March 19, 1906
5th vers: 4 acts, Berlin, October 16, 1908
6th vers: 4 acts, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, February 1, 1923\textsuperscript{c}

continued on next page

Table I.1: The operas of Giacomo Puccini
Table 1.1 (continued)

**La Bohème — 1896**
- **Libretto:** Giacosa and Illica
- **Source:** the episodic novel, *Scènes de la vie de Bohème* (appeared serially in *Le Coisraire* from 1845 to 1848, published in book form in 1851), by Henry Murger (1822-1861), and the five-act play based on it, *La vie de bohème* (1849), by Théodore Barrière (1823-1877)
- **1st vers:** *Opera in quattro quadri*, Torino, Teatro Regio, February 1, 1896
- **2nd vers:** 4 acts, Manchester, Carl Rosa Company, April 22, 1897
- **3rd vers:** 4 acts, Paris, Opéra-Comique, June 13, 1898
- **4th vers:** 4 acts, copyright November 18, 1898

**Tosca — 1900**
- **Libretto:** Giacosa and Illica
- **Source:** the five-act play *La Tosca* (1887), by Victorien Sardou (1831-1908)
- **1st vers:** *Melodramma in tre atti*, Roma, Teatro Costanzi, January 14, 1900
- **2nd vers:** 3 acts, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, March, 1900
- **3rd vers:** 3 acts, Paris, Opéra-Comique, 1909

**Madama Butterfly — 1904**
- **Libretto:** Giacosa and Illica
- **Source:** the one-act play, *Madame Butterfly* (1900), by David Belasco (1854-1931), which was a dramatization of a short-story by John Luther Long (1861-1927), which appeared in *Century Magazine* (1897) and had been derived from a true incident told to him by his sister, the wife of a missionary stationed in Nagasaki
- **1st vers:** *Tragedia giapponese in due atti*, Milano, Teatro alla Scala, February 17, 1904
- **2nd vers:** *Tragedia giapponese in due atti* [3 acts], Brescia, Teatro Grande, May 28, 1904
- **3rd vers:** 3 acts, London, Covent Garden, July 10, 1905
- **4th vers:** 3 acts, Paris, Opéra-Comique, December 28, 1906

**La Fanciulla del West — 1910**
- **Libretto:** Guelfo Civinini (1873-1954) and Carlo Zangarini (1874-1943)
- **Source:** the three-act play, *The Girl of the Golden West* (1905), by Belasco
- **1st vers:** *Opera in tre atti*, New York City, Metropolitan Opera House, December 10, 1910
- **2nd vers:** 3 acts, London, Covent Garden, May 29, 1911
- **3rd vers:** 3 acts, Roma, Teatro Costanzi, June 12, 1911
- **4th vers:** 3 acts, Paris, Opéra, May 16, 1912
- **5th vers:** 3 acts, October 1922

continued on next page
Table 1.1 (continued)

**La Rondine** — 1917
- **Libretto:** Giuseppe Adami (1878-1946)
- **Source:** an original libretto in German by Alfred Maria Willner (1859-1929) and Heinz Reichert (1877-1940)
- **1st vers.:** *Commedia lirica in tre atti*, Monte Carlo, Théâtre de l'Opéra, March 27, 1917
- **2nd vers.:** a — 3 acts, Palermo, Teatro Massimo, April 10, 1920
- **2nd vers.:** b — 3 acts, Vienna, Volksoper, October 9, 1920, in German as *Die Schwalbe*
- **3rd vers.:** 3 acts, 1921

**Il Trittico** — 1918 — First published as a single score.
- Three one-act operas, New York, Metropolitan Opera House, December 14, 1918.

### **Il Tabarro**
- **Libretto:** Adami
- **Source:** the one-act play, *La Houppelande* (1910), by Didier Gold
- **1st vers.:** *Opera in un atto*: see above
- **2nd vers.:** see above, 1919
- **3rd vers.:** October 1925 (first individual publication)

### **Suor Angelica**
- **Libretto:** Giovacchino Forzano (1884-1970)
- **Source:** an original story by Forzano
- **1st vers.:** *Opera in un atto*: see above
- **2nd vers.:** 1918 (alterations made after publication of original version, but before it went on sale)
- **3rd vers.:** see above, 1919
- **First individual publication:** October 1925
- **4th vers.:** published 1927

### **Gianni Schicchi**
- **Libretto:** Forzano
- **Source:** a brief passage (Canto XXX) from the narrative poem, *Commedia*, Part 1: *Inferno* (begun c.1307), by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)
- **1st vers.:** *Opera in un atto*: see above
- **2nd vers.:** see above, 1919
- **First individual publication:** March 1923

continued on next page
Table 1.1 (continued)

**Turandot** — 1926

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libretto:</th>
<th>Adami and Renato Simoni (1875-1952)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source:</td>
<td>the five-act play, <em>Turandotte</em> (1762), by Carlo Lucio Graf Gozzi (1720-1806), which was translated into German (1802) by Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), and then re-translated into Italian (1857) by Andrea Maffei (1798-1885)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st vers:</td>
<td><em>Dramma lirico in tre atti e cinque quadri</em>: incomplete,¹ last duet and final scene completed by Franco Alfano (1876-1954), Milano, Teatro alla Scala, April 25, 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd vers:</td>
<td>3 acts, last duet and final scene by Alfano, edited severely by Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957), Milano, Teatro alla Scala, November 24, 1926</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The multiple versions are identified by Cecil Hopkinson in *A Bibliography of the Works of Giacomo Puccini* (New York: Broude Brothers, 1968).

²No librettist was acknowledged in original published score.

³Suzanne Scherr has noted two additional versions of *Manon Lescaut*; however, these appear to be more editorial than compositional. See "Editing Puccini's Operas: 'The Case of *Manon Lescaut*," *Acta Musicologica*, LXII/1 (January-April 1990), 62-81.

⁴Although the revised version of *Madama Butterfly* divides the original Act II into two separate acts (II and III), the orchestral score still refers to this opera as being in two acts. Act II is divided as "Parte prima" and "Parte seconda." The various piano-vocal scores, however, refer to it as an opera in three acts.

⁵Puccini added 16 bars to the Act II Minnie-Johnson "Love Duet" especially for the Rome revival of 1922; however, it was not performed on that occasion, because the singers balked at its vocal demands (it culminates in a high C for both singers); the composer included it, however, in his final revised score. See letter to Riccardo Schnabl, October 11, 1922, in *Carteggi Pucciniani*, ed. Gara, letter 843, 530-31. See also Gara letters 845 (October 17, 1922) and 846 (October 29, 1922), both to Renzo Valcarengi. The first performance of this passage took place in June 1923 at the Teatro Politeama, Viareggio. See William Ashbrook, *The Operas of Puccini* (Oxford University Press, 1968), 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 151.

⁶This version was possibly not performed until June 1987 (Bologna, Teatro Comunale). See William Ashbrook, "*La Rondine,*" *The Puccini Companion*, ed. William Weaver and Simonetta Puccini (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), 259-60.

⁷Although the three one-act operas were given this collective title by Puccini and his original concept was to have them performed as a single evening's entertainment, they have no musical and very little dramatic relationship with one another and have most often been performed as separate works. They are treated as such in the present study.

⁸Possibly never performed.

¹Puccini, intending to complete the score, was forced to suspend his composing so that he might journey to Brussels for medical treatment.
The real score, to be sure, is the orchestral score, i.e., the score that Puccini composed, sent to the publisher, and later proofread for publication. As it happens, the piano-vocal scores in the editions used here, aside from certain exceptions to be mentioned below, follow the orchestral scores faithfully. Of the piano-vocal scores, all but two were prepared by one and the same person, Carlo Carignani (1857-1919), a longtime associate of Puccini's of whom the composer once said, "He knows my intentions better than I do." Carignani, hired by Giulio Ricordi specifically to make the piano-vocal reductions of Puccini's operas, was both a friend and a trusted amanuensis. He was sometimes in Puccini's presence as the music was being composed, and many times he would begin the piano reductions from the composer's pencil sketches; that is, even before Puccini had sent the score to Ricordi. The two piano-vocal scores not prepared by Carignani were those of Puccini's first and last operas. The piano-vocal score for Le Villi was prepared by Carlo Chiusuri, whom Casa Ricordi would later employ as "a special Puccini copyist."

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45 According to Hopkinson, no orchestral score was published for either Le Villi or Edgar. A Bibliography of the Works of Giacomo Puccini (New York: Broude Brothers, 1968), 4 & 7. This is, however, not the case, since published copies of each, as reprinted by Edwin F. Kalmus & Co., are readily available and are in my possession. Both of these scores were originally issued by G. Ricordi & Co.; the original Ricordi plate number for Le Villi is 126797 (issued 1944), and that for Edgar is 126795 (issued 1905).

46 William Ashbrook, The Operas of Puccini (Oxford University Press, 1968), 2nd. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 20. This quotation was given to Ashbrook by Raffaele Tenaglia, who was employed by G. Ricordi & Co. in 1913 and "latter became a specialist in deciphering Puccini's frequently messy scrawl and played a central part in preparing Il Tritico and Turandot for publication." Ibid., xviii. Puccini's statement was probably made to Tenaglia at some time in 1918, the year in which Il Tritico was first published. The composer's regard for and dependence on Carignani's assistance is amply attested by many mentions of Carignani in the composer's letters. (See, for example, Letters of Giacomo Puccini (Mainly Connected with the Composition and Production of his Operas), ed. Giuseppe Adami, trans. Ena Makin. New York: Vienna House, 1973, specifically letters 19, 27, 29, 43, 45, 47, 58, 110, 117, 129.)

47 On July 28, 1910, from Torre del Lago, Puccini wrote to Giulio Ricordi concerning the completion of La Fanciulla del West: "Dear Signor Giulio, The opera is finished! I have done a little cutting and left out some rather nice but useless things from the libretto. This was done at midnight. I assure you, that as it now stands, it is emotionally, as well as scenically and in its fine conclusion, a work that will matter. It was last night, with me as judge and Carignani as counsel, that the case of Minnie and her friends was concluded. God be praised! Yours affectionately..." Letters of Giacomo Puccini, ed. Adami, letter 110, 185.

48 Ashbrook, Operas of Puccini, 20.

49 Hopkinson, Bibliography, 1-4.

According to George Marek, Chiusuri, in Puccini's early career, "was one of the very few who could make sense out of his [Puccini's] hieroglyphics"\textsuperscript{51} and would often take a day to copy a single page of manuscript, "with much meditation, [and] prayers to God and to Job."\textsuperscript{52} For \textit{Turandot}, the task of producing a piano-vocal score was accomplished by another Ricordi copyist, Guido Zuccoli.\textsuperscript{53} My comparisons of these two piano-vocal scores with their respective orchestral scores show that these copyists, too, were faithful to the composer's intent.

The inconsistencies between the orchestral scores and the editions of the piano-vocal scores, mentioned above, are found in \textit{Manon Lescaut} and \textit{La Fanciulla del West}.\textsuperscript{54} They arose from changes made by Puccini after the Italian-English edition of the piano-vocal score had been published.

Although there is not yet a uniform critical edition,\textsuperscript{55} all twelve of Puccini's operas have been published in both orchestral and piano-vocal scores that accurately transmit the composer's intentions, even allowing us to compare the various versions in which each opera exists.\textsuperscript{56} In Cecil Hopkinson's \textit{A Bibliography of the Works of Giacomo Puccini} (New York: Broude Brothers, 1968) we have a catalog of all the various published editions, versions, and variants of the Puccini operas, with comparative notes concerning each.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53}Hopkinson, \textit{Bibliography}, 52.
\textsuperscript{54}In \textit{Manon Lescaut}, the differences occur at the end of Manon's Act II aria, "L'ora, o Tirsi," and in much of Act IV, particularly the second half of the act. The single discrepancy in \textit{La Fanciulla del West} appears at the end of the Minnie-Johnson duet in Act II (see footnote in Table 1.1).
\textsuperscript{55}G. Ricordi & Co. is in the process of preparing critical editions, in both piano-vocal and orchestral scores, of \textit{La Bohème}, ed. Francesco Degrada; \textit{Tosca}, ed. Roger Parker; and \textit{Madama Butterfly}, ed. Julian Smith; none of these, however, has yet been published.
\textsuperscript{56}All were initially published by G. Ricordi & Co., Milano, with the exception of \textit{La Rondine}, which was published by Casa Musicale Sonzogno (Milano) and Ebenschütz & Berté, now Universal-Edition (Wien). See note 45 for more details.
\textsuperscript{57}Although Hopkinson mentions Puccini's non-operatic compositions, the operas, both in their orchestral and piano-vocal scores, are the primary focus of his study. Hopkinson uses the term "version" to describe any printing of the score "in which there are changes in the music" (xiii). There are exceptions to this,
As mentioned above, the multiple published versions of Puccini's operatic scores resulted from the composer's well-known habit of continually revising each opera after its original publication. Fortunately, Puccini's close connection with his publishing firm, G. Ricordi & Co., and especially his working relationship with Giulio Ricordi (1840-1912), its head through most of Puccini's career, allowed the composer to make revisions, usually of minor importance, in the operas and then to have the scores re-published several times in new versions.\(^{58}\) For the present study, the choice has been made to use for each opera the last published version that Puccini approved.\(^{59}\) A single exception is made for *La Rondine*, for which, after making a second and a third version of the score and seeing them both published, Puccini ultimately jettisoned both of these in favor of the original version.\(^{60}\) This is the one performed today, because it is the only one bearing Puccini's final approval.

3. Formal structures in Puccini's operas

In Puccini operas, each act consists of from about a half-dozen to about two dozen major structural components, each demarcated from its neighbors by a clearly recognizable beginning and either an unmistakable conclusion or, where that is lacking, the decisive beginning of the ensuing component.\(^{61}\) Most of these components are (not surprisingly)

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\(^{58}\) See Table 1.1. As noted above, most of these changes were minor cuts; however, there were several versions of scores in which the composer made substantial cuts or other revisions, sometimes involving the addition of new music (see footnote in Table 1.1 concerning *La Fanciulla del West*).

\(^{59}\) It is known from many of the published letters that Puccini made changes in and ultimately approved printed proofs of his scores.

\(^{60}\) Ashbrook documents this unique situation in his article on *La Rondine in The Puccini Companion*, ed. William Weaver and Simonetta Puccini (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), 244-64, and Michael Kaye, *Unknown Puccini*, 173-214, presents additional information concerning the various versions of *La Rondine*.

\(^{61}\) In all but one opera, Puccini does not label vocal pieces. His earliest opera, *Le Vili* (1884), contains various labels for vocal and instrumental pieces (i.e., "numbers") that conform to the established Italian models of the time (see "Entrances and Exits" chapter)—for instance, "scena," "duetto," and the like.
principally vocal; there are, however, quite a few purely orchestral passages. Each of the vocal components belongs to one of two principal types. One is generally called "set piece." The term seems appropriate since examples of the type tend, by their comparative thematic consistency and tonal stability, to emphasize, within Puccini's characteristic flux, the fixed and immutable. The other type, on the contrary, tends, by its comparative thematic fluidity and tonal instability, to emphasize the evanescent. This second type might be called, for want of an established term, "transient passage."

The set pieces range in duration from about one to seventeen minutes, with most of them lasting one to five minutes.62 There are several types of set pieces, principally the aria, the ensemble, the chorus, and the pezzo concertato. Some of Puccini's set pieces are large multi-sectional structures, following in the tradition of earlier nineteenth-century Italian opera, in which the term "set piece" generally referred to a work comprising several smaller pieces (e.g., a four-movement aria consisting of a "scena," a "cantabile," a "tempo di mezzo," and a "cabaletta"; or a three-movement duet comprising a "tempo d'attacco," a "tempo di mezzo," and a "cabaletta"). In general, however, a Puccini set piece is a single relatively independent unit.

An "aria" in Puccini, as in opera at large, is a set piece for solo voice, entirely or for the most part melodious in character. (The "perpetual pregnancy" in Puccini's melody63 is one of the best-known characteristics of his style.) His arias are typically syllabic and predominantly legato in style and moderate or slow in tempo, as in the well-known

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62 Approximate timings mentioned in this study are based on the recordings listed in the Appendix. It should be noted that Puccini placed metronome marks throughout his scores.

examples "Vissi d'arte" (Tosca, Act II: andante lento appassionato, quarter-note=40) and "Un bel di vedremo" (Madama Butterfly, Act II: andante molto calmo, quarter-note=42). An aria may make some use of recitative, as in the conclusion of "Si. Mi chiamano Mimi" (La Bohème, Act I); and it may also employ passages in parlante (to be defined below), as at the beginning of Cavaradossi's "E lucevan le stelle" (Tosca, Act III). It may include brief interjections by other singers, as in Calaf's "Nessun dorma!" (Turandot, Act III), where a female chorus interrupts the flow of the tenor's vocal line. And an aria may incorporate a lengthy passage for the orchestra alone, as at the beginning of Cavaradossi's "Recondita armonia" (Tosca, Act I). Despite the clarity of beginnings and endings of structural components, mentioned above, a Puccini aria is not always strongly demarcated from its surroundings; sometimes its beginning simply wells up from the preceding recitative, and its ending just sinks back into recitation.

An "ensemble" in Puccini, as in opera at large, is a set piece for two or more solo voices that typically employs the melodious style of an aria. In Puccini's ensembles, however, more use is made of parlante and recitative than is typical of his arias. Like an aria, an ensemble may include a lengthy orchestral passage or brief interjections by singers other than the principals.

Puccini's ensembles fall into two main classes: those in which the voices unite in simultaneous singing and those in which they do not. Most fall into the first category, and most of those are duets. The duet is like an aria except that the musical interest is more or less equally shared between two voice parts. Two well known examples are Mimi's and Rodolfo's "O soave fanciulla," which concludes Act I of La Bohème, and the so-called "Love Duet," beginning with the text "Viene la sera," which is sung by Butterfly and Pinkerton and concludes Act I of Madama Butterfly. Trios, quartets, quintets, and larger solo ensembles in Puccini are like duets in style, only they are apt to be shorter. They are also uncommon; in fact, there are only nine trios, three quartets, two quintets, and eight
larger solo ensembles in all of Puccini's operas. A well-known example of a Puccinian trio is the one beginning with the text "Io so che alle sue pene" in Act III of Madama Butterfly (Suzuki, Pinkerton, and Sharpless). Undoubtedly the best known of Puccini's quartets is the one beginning with the text "Addio dolce svegliare" (Mimi, Musetta, Rodolfo, and Marcello), which concludes Act III of La Bohème. One of his two quintets is the "Madrigale," so called by Puccini, from Act II of Manon Lescaut; this is performed by five nameless female characters.

The term "dialogue ensemble" has been adopted here for those ensembles in Puccini's operas in which the vocal forces, occasionally including a chorus, remain always somewhat apart, never uniting to sing simultaneously. For simplicity's sake, this type of ensemble is here referred to as a "dialogue ensemble," regardless of the number of participants, which may range from two to nine characters (counting the chorus as a single character). Prominent examples of the dialogue ensemble are the "Torture Scene" in Act II of Tosca, for Scarpia, Tosca, Cavadarossi, Sciarrone, and Spoletta; and the three dialogues in Act II of Madama Butterfly, for Butterfly and Sharpless.

Choruses—i.e., set pieces sung by a chorus throughout, with or without brief interjections by soloists—are like trios, quartets, and larger solo ensembles in their rarity. Indeed, there are only sixteen in the entire Puccini œuvre. As it happens, the longest and most elaborate choruses in the composer's dozen operas are found in his first, Le Villi. These, three in number, are "Evviva!" and "Gira! gira! gira!," from Act I, and "Gira!...Balza!," from Act II. Interestingly enough, the Puccini choruses best-known to operagoers today are those found in his final opera, Turandot. (It is an oddity that it is in his first and last operas that Puccini made the most important use of the chorus.) One of the well-known choruses from Turandot is Act I's "Gira la cote, gira, gira!," in which the

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64 The chorus is used to portray collective characters—for example, "Uomini del Campo" in Act I of La Fanciulla del West. In a dialogue ensemble they function as a single participant.
chorus cries out for the execution of Turandot's latest unsuccessful suitor. Another is the triumphant "Imperial Hymn" chorus, beginning with the text "Ai tuo piedi," which concludes Act II.

In the operas of Puccini, as in dramatic literature from the Greeks onward, the singers in the chorus, whether taking a direct part in the action or commenting on the action or both, are dramatic participants. This is not true, however, in the so-called "Humming Chorus" that concludes Act II of *Madama Butterfly*. There the unseen and unnamed singers merely hum their wordless tune, functioning purely as an orchestral *timbre*.  

The term "pezzo concertato," employed by nineteenth-century Italian composers from Rossini through Verdi and potentially useful with respect to Puccini, is defined in the glossary to *The Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music: History of Opera* as "a section within a finale in Italian 19th-century opera in which several characters express divergent emotions simultaneously, a 'multiple soliloquy' (as it were)." By that definition, a pezzo concertato is simply an ensemble within a finale. However, Julian Budden, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, after describing the pezzo concertato as "a large ensemble of soloists and chorus generally to be found as the second movement of a central finale, to which it forms the lyrical climax," goes on to say, "pezzi concertati can also occasionally be found elsewhere in the course of the action—during a *prologo*...or in the middle of an act...." He adds, "such pieces are normally slow and contemplative, the characters advancing to the footlights and losing all count of time," and then notes, near the conclusion of the article, that "in his later operas Verdi attempted, not always successfully, to give his *pezzi concertati* a sense of movement," and finally points out that this "problem
was triumphanty solved by Puccini in the roll-call of the prostitutes that concludes [sic] Act 3 of *Manon Lescaut* (1893)." 67 Thus, the traditional stylistic implications of this term broke down in Puccini's lifetime. It seems appropriate to use the term here in a very general way; "pezzo concertato" will stand for any ensemble for one or more solo voices and chorus, without restriction as to tempo, level of activity, or placement within the act. 68 Of the thirty-six pezzi concertati in Puccini's operas, perhaps the three best-known examples are Butterfly's entrance in Act I of *Madama Butterfly*, the Miners' remorseful "Che faranno i vecchi miei" 69 from the first act of *La Fanciulla del West*, and the above-mentioned roll-call scene.

The term "transient passage" has been adopted here to emphasize changeability; typically such a passage consists of a multiplicity of brief sections differing in character, tonality, and thematic material. Most of the sections are vocal, in any or all of the three vocal styles arioso, parlante, and recitative, 70 although orchestral sections also occur. Transient passages precede and/or follow set pieces, and they range in length from only a few seconds to five minutes or longer. It should be clear from this description that they are analogous to the nineteenth-century Italian "scena" that precedes a formal piece, 71 though they are not necessarily introductory like a scena. Indeed, occasionally an act or an entire opera may end with one of these passages. When a "transient passage" concludes an act or

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68 A dialogue ensemble employing a chorus is not a pezzo concertato, because the chorus never sings simultaneously with the principals.

69 Popularly, although incorrectly, known through Mosgo Carner as "the nostalgic 'The Old Dog Tray.'" *Puccini*, 3rd ed. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1992), 458.

70 "Recitative" and "arioso" ("aria-like") are well-known terms, presumably needing no explanation.

"Parlante," a term in use since the mid-nineteenth century, refers to a style in which the vocal part is unmelodious and speech-like, while the orchestra carries the melodic and metrical structure; in Puccini the orchestral melody is nearly always legato in character.

an opera, its multiple fluid sections invariably proceed to a relatively brief orchestral coda that is tonally stable and thus brings the act to an end with a sense of stability.

The fourth act of *La Bohème* begins with an introductory transient passage that leads to the Rodolfo-Marcello duet beginning with the words "O Mimi, tu più non torni." Lasting approximately ninety-five seconds, this introduction incorporates a variety of recalled motives and a brief dialogue in recitative between the two dejected Bohemians. Although this component begins and ends in one and the same key (C major), the nine different sections of this transient passage quickly traverse ten other tonalities as well.

A well-known example of a conclusion to an act that might be called a transient passage occurs at the end of *Madama Butterfly*, following Butterfly's suicide aria, "Tu? piccolo Iddio!" In the course of approximately eighty seconds, Butterfly staggers from behind a screen, Pinkerton and Sharpless enter, Butterfly dies, Pinkerton falls to his knees in remorse, and Sharpless, horrified, takes Butterfly's child into his arms. Although the central key of B minor is more or less maintained throughout, the listener is presented with three different melodic motives in fairly rapid succession, and the shocking final chord, because it violently clashes with the listener's tonal expectation, upholds Puccini's principle of continuous fluxion even at the very end of the opera.

Not surprisingly, the majority of Puccini's transient passages occur within acts, where they lead from one set piece to another. They vary widely in length and complexity. A representative one, with multiple sections differing in character and tonality as well as in thematic material, appears in Act II of *Manon Lescaut*, connecting the end of the Manon-Des Grieux love duet (beginning with the text "Tu, tu amore? Tu?!") with Des Grieux's aria, "Ah! Manon, mi tradisce." This transient passage, which is a little more than three minutes in duration, consists of nine sections in varying styles. It represents, in order, Geronte's unexpected entrance, his dismay and verbal disgust with Manon, her nonchalant behavior towards her benefactor, Geronte's warning of retribution, his subsequent exit,
Manon's joy at being rid of the old man, Des Grieux's concern, his urging of Manon to make a hasty departure, and finally Manon's regret at having to leave her luxurious way of life. This passage, based on several different thematic motives, traverses at least fourteen tonalities in its course from F major, at the end of the preceding duet, to A minor, the tonality in which the ensuing aria begins.

An example of a short vocal transition that links two set pieces and might be called a "transient passage," even though it lacks multiple sections, characters, and thematic motives, is the brief passage connecting the close of Mimi's aria, "Donde lietà usci," with the quartet of the four principals (Mimi, Musetta, Rodolfo, and Marcello), "Addio dolce svegliare," that closes Act III of *La Bohème*. Upon the completion of the aria, in D♭ major, Rodolfo sings a brief passage, approximately twenty seconds in duration, in recitative. As he expresses his remorse at Mimi's decision to leave him, the music establishes a new tonality for the quartet, G♭ major.

By far the longest transient passage in all of Puccini's operas occurs in Act II of *Madama Butterfly*, linking the termination of Butterfly's aria, "Un bel di vedremo," with the Butterfly-Sharpless dialogue ensemble in which Sharpless reads to Butterfly the letter he has just received from Pinkerton. In the course of more than ten minutes we witness the entrance of Sharpless, Butterfly's welcome, her questions concerning Pinkerton's return, Prince Yamadori's entrance, Goro and Yamadori's taunting of Butterfly for her faithfulness to Pinkerton, her response, Yamadori's exit, and the attempt of Sharpless to quiet Butterfly so that he can read the letter. This transient passage consists of thirty-one contrasting sections, presents thirty-two thematic ideas, and encompasses at least thirty-five modulations on the way from the preceding aria's G♭ major to B♭ major, the tonality of the forthcoming dialogue ensemble.

Finally, a brief comment on relatively independent orchestral passages: in Puccini's scores, the orchestral pieces are generally untitled; in fact, there are only five examples of
orchestral pieces to which Puccini affixed a title. *Le Villi* begins with a "Preludio," and its Act II begins with two orchestral pieces to which the composer gave the descriptive names "L'Abbandono" and "La Tregenda." Act III of *Edgar* begins with a "Preludio." Finally, Act III of *Manon Lescaut* begins with perhaps the best-known of Puccini's orchestral pieces, the sometimes excerpted "Intermezzo" (i.e., entr'acte); it uses recurring musical motives to imply action occurring between Acts II and III. An orchestral piece may contain brief interjections by singers, as in the prelude to Act III of *Madama Butterfly*, where a group of sailors can be heard singing in the distance. Not all of Puccini's orchestral pieces are preludes. An example of an orchestral piece within an act can be found near the end of *Suor Angelica*, where it serves as accompaniment for a pantomime in which the distraught Angelica mixes a suicide potion. On a few occasions Puccini ends an act with an instrumental piece. The piece that concludes Act II of *Tosca*, for instance, accompanies the celebrated diva's melodramatic actions preceding her exit, from the moment when she realizes that she has, in fact, killed Scarpia.

4. Labeling conventions followed in this study

Throughout the following discussion the primary units within set pieces are represented by upper-case letters (A, B, C, etc.).\(^{72}\) An introduction is represented by the symbol "Intro"; a transition, by "Trans"; a coda, by "Coda." Further, if there is more than one transition, each is numbered (Trans1, Trans2, etc.). If a primary unit divides into secondary units, the latter are symbolized by lower-case letters (a, b, c, etc.) within parentheses following the primary unit, e.g., A (=a b a'). If there is an introduction, a transition, or a coda on this secondary level, the symbols are in lower-case letters (intro, trans, coda) and are placed within the aforementioned parentheses.

\(^{72}\) A "primary unit" means the principal division within a set piece, regardless of duration. Smaller divisions are here called secondary. There are several instances of secondary units being as long as or longer in duration than primary units.
Readers of this study are advised to have available either the orchestral scores or the piano-vocal scores of the Puccini operas. The specific editions used here are listed in the bibliography, which includes their plate numbers. Locations within each opera are specified by reference to the nearest rehearsal number, whether that comes before or after. The rehearsal number is underlined. For example, \(15+4\) means that the piece begins four measures after rehearsal number 15; \(10-5\) means that the piece begins five measures before rehearsal number 10. If a set piece begins on an upbeat, the reference will read, for example, "upbeat to \(12+3\)." Rehearsal numbers are synchronously placed in the orchestral and piano-vocal scores of each opera.

Throughout this treatise, most references to thematic motives use labels taken from Ray S. Macdonald's book, *Puccini: King of Verismo*,\(^73\) in which he sets out to analyze each of Puccini's operas "by stressing the modern music-drama element"\(^74\) of leitmotifs, the "hallmark of the Wagnerian system."\(^75\) His work, despite its rather unfortunate title, is essentially a thematic catalogue, listing for each opera the musical themes that he considers symbolic. While Macdonald's method is rather extreme in its attempt to link every important Puccini motive to a dramatic idea, his labels are a handy tool for referring to specific musical motives. It should also be noted that in Puccini's operas recurring motives are primarily of the "reminiscence" type, in which the motive remains more or less unaltered throughout the opera, not "leitmotifs" that are transformed and developed in the Wagnerian sense.

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\(^75\) *Ibid.*, 22.
5. Principal divisions of the one-act operas

As most Puccini scholars agree, each of the one-act operas of Il Tritico divides into two major dramatic sections of more or less equal duration,\(^{76}\) the first setting the scene and the second playing out the drama. Puccini sets these sections apart from each other by varying degrees of silence. Thus, they can be viewed, in their own miniature way, as separate "acts" or dramatic divisions.

The division into two sections operates very well for Il Tabarro and Gianni Schicchi. As the first half of Il Tabarro begins to draw to a close, all of the characters exit with the exception of Luigi and Giorgetta, and a pair of offstage voices are heard singing the textless strains of the "River Seine" motive,\(^{77}\) which began the opera and which will not be heard again for the remainder of the score. The rhythm slows and the music comes to a complete stop with a V\(^9\)-I cadence, followed by an empty ("vuota") measure. From this point in the score (rehearsal number \(57\)), the drama focuses entirely on the three main characters: Giorgetta, Luigi, and Michele.

The dramatic division of Gianni Schicchi is a little less clear than that of Il Tabarro but still quite evident. In order for Schicchi to implement his plan and yet insure his daughter's innocence in his devilish plot, he must send her away. Immediately after the relatives plead for his assistance, Schicchi sends Lauretta offstage by telling her to go feed the bird on the terrace. His recitative is sung over a combination of the "Death" and "Mischief" motives,\(^{78}\) which were heard at almost the very outset of the opera; as in Il Tabarro, recurring motivic material creates a sense of rounded symmetry for the first half of the work.\(^{79}\) After Schicchi stops Rinuccio from escorting Lauretta out, with a curt "Sola,"

\(^{76}\) In Il Tabarro the sections are roughly 26 and 25 minutes; in Suor Angelica they are approximately 25 and 30 minutes, and in Gianni Schicchi they are roughly 27 and 25 minutes.
\(^{77}\) Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 134.
\(^{78}\) Ibid., 153.
\(^{79}\) Interestingly enough, the combination of these two motives will appear only once in the second half of the score: as Schicchi first greets the notary and witnesses.
the orchestral material suddenly stops in mid-phrase and is then followed by a rest with fermata (44); this allows Lauretta enough time to exit completely before Schicchi begins plotting with the relatives.

*Suor Angelica* might better be understood as having three, rather than two, major dramatic sections. Roughly the first half of the opera, as in the other two one-act operas, sets the atmosphere for the drama: the generally tranquil life in the convent. This half concludes with the announcement of a visitor for Angelica, and—as in the other two one-acts—it concludes with silence, though only momentary and with no fermata (42). With the second dramatic division, roughly the third quarter of the opera, the impelling force of the drama is presented. This scene encompasses the entrance of La Zia Principessa, her confrontation with Angelica in which the aunt coldly informs the penitent nun of her child's death, and finally the exit of the princess, which leaves Angelica alone onstage. As was the case in *Il Tabarro*, this exit is followed by a tonally-closed complete musical stop followed by silence (60-1). As the music resumes with Angelica's aria "Senza mamma," the third and final dramatic division begins. As in the case of *Il Tabarro*, Puccini gradually eliminates characters until only the primary principals are left: as *Suor Angelica* begins, there are many characters coming and going; in the second section, the number is reduced to two, and finally, in the last section, the drama is focused entirely on a single character. For approximately the last fifteen minutes of the opera, Angelica is seen mourning her child, contemplating her earthly situation, mixing a fatal potion and then drinking it, realizing her mistake and begging for salvation, and finally finding redemption via a miracle.

While great care will be taken in this study not to confuse the final acts of the multi-act operas with these final dramatic divisions of the one-act operas, portions of this study will treat these final dramatic divisions as analogous to final acts.
CHAPTER 2

TEMPORAL AND GEOGRAPHIC SETTINGS OF FINAL ACTS

In considering Puccini's manner of bringing his operas to conclusion, it is helpful to be aware of his use of time and space as elements of dramatic pacing; for instance, do the composer and librettist carefully set the scene at the beginning of the final act, then keep it constant, or do locations tumble over one another in quick succession? does the drive toward the climax in the finale merely conclude the fast-moving events of a single day, or have the changing seasons of the year formed the backdrop for the slowly unfolding events of the preceding act? As the latter question illustrates, the temporal and geographic settings of the finale acts must necessarily relate to those of the previous acts. This discussion, though focused on finales, will therefore deal with the operas as wholes as well.

1. Temporal settings

The temporal settings will be considered from the point of view of year, season, and time of day. In addition, lapse of time will be considered. All of the plots, with the certain exception of Madama Butterfly and the possible exception of Manon Lescaut, unfold within a single year or less. As Table 2.1 shows, the particular year is given at the beginning of the score (and libretto also) in a variety of ways, from vague reference to a
century to precise indication of the year itself. The only Puccini opera with absolutely no hint of a year of setting is *Turandot*, which, according to the score, is set in legendary times ("al tempo delle favole").

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Le Villi</em></td>
<td>1800s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>1302-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>2nd half of the 18th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Bohème</em></td>
<td>c. 1830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>&quot;the present&quot; (i.e., 1901-04)(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Fanciulla del West</em></td>
<td>1849-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td>&quot;Second Empire&quot; (i.e., 1852-70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>&quot;the present&quot; (i.e., 1918)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td>end of the 17th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>1299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Turandot</em></td>
<td>legendary times (&quot;al tempo delle favole&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)It may be assumed that Act I takes place in 1901 in order to accommodate the three-year lapse between Acts I and II.

Table 2.1: Temporal settings: year of plots as a whole

There are only five general time periods in which Puccini's operas take place: the turn of the fourteenth century (*Edgar* and *Gianni Schicchi*), the end of the seventeenth century (*Suor Angelica*), the end of the eighteenth century (*Manon Lescaut*); the early to middle nineteenth century (*Le Villi, La Bohème, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West*, and *La Rondine*), and the early twentieth century (*Madama Butterfly* and *Il Tabarro*). Like other
Italian composers of his day, Puccini’s choices for possible operatic subjects often veered toward the relatively contemporary plots of the mid-to-late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.¹

As mentioned above, all twelve of Puccini’s operas take place within the time-frame of a single year, with the exceptions of Madama Butterfly (in which three years elapse between Acts I and II) and possibly Manon Lescaut (for which no exact time is given; it could unfold within a single year, but the story seems to require longer than that). See Table 2.2. Four operas take approximately one year for their stories to unfold: Le Villi, Edgar, La Bohème, and La Rondine. The story of La Fanciulla del West takes place over the course of a single week: in Act III, Nick tells Rance that he would give up ten-weeks-worth of tips to go back only one week to the point where Johnson first appeared. The remaining five operas follow classical “unity of time”: less than twenty-four hours elapse from the beginning to the end of both Tosca and Turandot; and all three of the one-act operas in Il Trittico have stories that take place in less than eight hours.

¹For example, among others, Mascagni’s Cavalleria Rusticana (1890), I Rantzau (1892), Silvano (1895), Zanetto (1896), Iris (1898) and Lodoletta (1917); Leoncavallo’s Pagliacci (1893), La Bohème (1897), and Zazà (1900); Giordano’s Fedora (1898) and Siberia (1903); Alfano’s Risurrezione (1904); Wolf-Ferrari’s Il Segreto di Susanna (1909) and I Gioielli della Madonna (1911); and Zandonai’s Conchita (1911).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Elapsed time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Le Villi</em></td>
<td>Spring (sunset)</td>
<td>Winter (night)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>Spring (morning)</td>
<td>[Spring?] (night)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>Spring (sunset)</td>
<td>[Summer?] (evening)</td>
<td>1-3 years?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Bohême</em></td>
<td>December (afternoon)</td>
<td>[Autumn?] (afternoon)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>June (midday)</td>
<td>June (early morning)</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>Spring (afternoon)</td>
<td>Spring (mid-morning)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Fanciulla del West</em></td>
<td>Winter (sunset)</td>
<td>Winter (morning)</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td>Spring (sunset)</td>
<td>Spring (late afternoon)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>September (sunset)</td>
<td>September (after 9:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>1 evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td>May (sunset)</td>
<td>May (near midnight)</td>
<td>1 evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>September 1 (9 a.m.)</td>
<td>September 1 (late afternoon)</td>
<td>1/2 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Turandot</em></td>
<td>Legendary (sunset)</td>
<td>Legendary (dawn)</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Temporal settings: lapse of time from the beginnings to the ends of the operas

The seasons of the year for the final acts and one-acts are sometimes open to question; however, they can often be determined from the libretto. In five cases the exact month can be determined, and in one of those cases the exact day of year is given. The only opera in which there is no clue given regarding the time of year is *Turandot*, although one might assume that the season is spring, which symbolically flowers as Calaf melts Turandot's frozen heart.

The opera in which the exact date is given is *Gianni Schicchi*. At the beginning of the score only the year, 1299, is given; however, as Amantio di Nicolao, the notary, is preparing to write Donati's will he verifies the exact date as September 1, 1299. In the case of *Tosca*, the month of June is indicated at the beginning of the score. In Act II of

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2 Helen Greenwald incorrectly identifies the season of the year for the setting of *Gianni Schicchi* as spring; however, she does question her choice. "Dramatic Exposition and Musical Structure in Puccini's Operas" (Ph.D. dissertation, City University of New York, 1991; Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 9119633, 1992), 169.
_Madama Butterfly_ Butterfly and Suzuki sing as they spread flowers around the house "Let us sow the month of April around us" ("Seminiamo intorno April"). Since Act III takes place the following day, it occurs in spring. By reading the libretto to _Il Tabarro_, one finds that Giorgetta mentions the red September sunset ("Oh che rosso tramonto di Settembre!"). In _Suor Angelica_ several of the Sisters inform the listener that it is the month of May ("È Maggio!").

Three operas have final acts in which the season of the year, although not the exact month, is designated in the score. At the beginning of "2°. Tempo: La Tregenda," as the scrim rises for Act II of _Le Villi_, the score says that it is winter ("è il verno"). At the beginning of Act III of _La Fanciulla del West_ the score declares that "no noise breaks the silence of the winter dawn" ("Nessun rumore turba il silenzio dell'alba invernale").\(^3\) Before the music for Act III of _La Rondine_ begins, the score states that it is "a magnificent spring day" ("una magnifica giornata di primavera").

The seasons of the final acts of the remaining three operas, which happen to be chronologically adjacent works, can only be conjectured. In _Edgar_ the libretto to Act III directs Fidelia to strew flowers over Edgar's coffin; therefore, it is unlikely to be autumn or winter. The progression of the story leads one to speculate that the season for Act III is most probably spring of the year following the April setting of Act I. According to the score of _Manon Lescaut_, Act I takes place on a spring evening; no season or month of the year is even remotely implied in Act II; Act III could possibly take place in autumn or winter, as the stage directions inform us that Des Grieux is wrapped in his coat; and finally, Act IV possibly occurs during the following summer, as Manon is consumed by thirst and Des Grieux eventually leaves her alone to search for water. The first three acts of _La Bohème_ have specific seasons: Act I and II take place on Christmas Eve and Act III is set

\(^3\) According to Greenwald, _La Fanciulla del West_ takes place in the month of January. _Ibid_. However, I have not been able to confirm this in the score or libretto.
on a snowy morning of the following February. The seasonal setting of Act IV, however, can be only vaguely inferred from the libretto, and it is apparently autumn.⁴

Concerning the initial temporal settings of Puccini's operas, Greenwald has correctly pointed out that the composer shows a marked preference for sunsets.⁵ Six of the operas begin at this time (Manon Lescaut, La Fanciulla del West, La Rondine, Il Tabarro, Suor Angelica, and Turandot). Two begin in the afternoon (Le Villi and La Bohème), one begins around the noon hour (Tosca) and two begin in the morning (Edgar and Gianni Schicchi). The conclusions of all the initial acts occur sometime after the noon hour, and not surprisingly show a strong preference for the evening hours. Eight initial acts conclude during the evening (Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West, La Rondine, Il Tabarro, Suor Angelica, and Turandot), while one (Le Villi) terminates at sunset, and three close in the afternoon hours (Edgar, Tosca, and Gianni Schicchi).

Puccini preferred to begin final acts within the hours of darkness; the specific times extend from sunset to dawn (see Table 2.3). Only two final acts begin in the full light of day, Bohème/IV and Rondine/III. The endings of the operas are about evenly divided between those set in darkness or semi-darkness and those set in the light of day (see the table).

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⁴We know from Act III that Mimi and Rodolfo have chosen to stay together through spring; Mimi and Rodolfo having gone their separate ways by the beginning of Act IV, it is presumably past spring. As Colline is wearing his coat and Musetta is able to purchase a muff for Mimi, it is probably not summer. No one other than Mimi complains of the cold, and there is no mention of a fire in the stove, a prominent feature of Act I; therefore it is likely not winter. The remaining possibility is autumn, and an autumn setting seems quite probable. The poem that precedes Act IV in the piano-vocal score says that Marcello and Musetta have not met for three or four months, and the same is true for Mimi and Rodolfo; thus, it could be as early as September or maybe even as late as November. Rodolfo has seen Musetta dressed in velvet, certainly an autumnal fabric. Towards the end of the act the stage directions refer to the shawl that Musetta has been wearing; had it been winter, this presumably would have been a coat. Finally, as Colline leaves to pawn his coat, he does not wear it but bundles it and places it under his arm. Had it been winter, surely he would have worn it one last time.

Table 2.3: Times of day of the final acts of the multi-act operas and of the complete one-act operas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final act</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II</td>
<td>evening</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III</td>
<td>sunset</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV</td>
<td>sunset</td>
<td>evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III</td>
<td>pre-dawn</td>
<td>early morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III</td>
<td>pre-dawn</td>
<td>mid-morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III</td>
<td>dawn</td>
<td>morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III</td>
<td>mid-afternoon</td>
<td>late afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro</td>
<td>sunset</td>
<td>evening (after 9 p.m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica</td>
<td>sunset</td>
<td>night (near midnight)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi</td>
<td>morning (9 a.m.)</td>
<td>late afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III</td>
<td>night</td>
<td>dawn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In several of the operas, the temporal setting is not identified in the stage directions or dialogue, but is part of the musical foreground. Three particularly evocative examples are the opening preludes to the final acts of Tosca and Madama Butterfly, and a moment near the end of Il Tabarro.

The prelude to Act III of Tosca is a tone painting of pre-dawn and early morning activity around Rome. The form of this piece is Intro A (=a b a') B (=a b b') C, and it begins, prior to the opening of the curtain, with an introductory unaccompanied melody for four horns in unison, which prefigures the conclusion of the forthcoming Tosca/Cavaradossi duet, where this melody is sung to the text "Trionfali... di nova speme l'anima freme in celestia crescente ardor... Ed in armonico vol già l'anima va all'estasi d'amor" ("Triumphant... with new hope the soul quivers in celestial growing ardor... and in harmonious flight already the soul goes to the ecstasy of love"). This introductory
melody, in E major (but somewhat modal: F♯ Dorian), has a tempo of *andante sostenuto*, half-note=63 in cut time, and progresses from *fortissimo* to *pianissimo* as the curtain rises.

With the curtain up, the sixty-measure A section begins at 1; it evokes, according to Carner, "the utter peace of early dawn in the Eternal City." The stage is empty, and the score states that it is still night, with "a clear sky, brilliant with stars." The meter and tempo remain the same as in the introduction, but the tonality, although still notated in E major, shifts from a feeling of F♯ Dorian to E Lydian. As mentioned above, the primary section A subdivides into secondary units a b a'. The a section presents a series of descending parallel triads in the upper orchestral voices, which are grouped in triplets over a slow-paced bass line, which alternates between tonic and dominant. The dynamics of this section remain very soft.

Section b begins with a sudden *fortissimo* at 2, but quickly returns to *piano*. The meter and tempo remain the same, while the tonality becomes rather nebulous with the appearance, in measures 6-12, of a series of chord progressions based on the "Scarpia" motive, which opened the opera. These progressions are then followed by a complete measure of silence.

The a' section (so labeled because the song it contains has accompaniment based on the orchestral material from section a), begins at 3. We hear sheep-bells tinkling in the distance, and Puccini presents the charming little pastoral song, "Io de' sospiri," which is sung offstage ("a voce spiegata, ma molto lontano," "in a full voice, but very far away") by a young shepherd boy. The tempo slows a bit (*un poco meno*) and the dynamic level is further decreased to *ppp*. The "Scarpia" progression makes another brief appearance during the song, at measures 15-16. As the shepherd's little song ends, the sheep bells die

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8See Chapter 3 for details on this song.
away even further into the distance, and the stage lighting begins to brighten slowly ("la luce incerta e gridia che precede l'alba", "the uncertain gray light just before dawn").

With the appearance of section B, at 4, the dynamic level is still further decreased to pppp and the tempo slows to lento, half-note=40. This fifty-one-measure section is tonally unstable. Various church bells chiming Matins ("le campane suonano mattutino") play a prominent role throughout; by using thirteen different pitches in combination with different designations of distance (affecting dynamics) for these church bells,9 with each combination having its own rhythmic pattern, Puccini evokes the aural image of a variety of different churches. During section B, the stage action finally begins:

A jailer carrying a lantern comes up the stairs, goes to the casement and lights the lamp hanging before the crucifix, then the one on the table. He goes to the rear of the platform and, leaning over the parapet, surveys the courtyard below, to see if the squad of soldiers escorting the condemned man has yet arrived. He meets the sentry who is patrolling the platform and exchanges some words with him. Returning to the casement, he sits down and waits, half-asleep.

At 7, as section C begins, the stage action continues:

A squad led by a sergeant escorts Cavaradossi onto the platform. The squad halts, the sergeant leads Cavaradossi to the casement. On seeing the sergeant, the jailer rises and salutes. The sergeant hands him a paper, which the jailer examines. Seating himself at the table, the jailer opens the register and writes in it while questioning Cavaradossi: "Mario Cavaradossi?" Cavaradossi nods yes. "A voi." The jailer hands the pen to the sergeant, who signs the register and goes down the stairs, followed by the soldiers.

This 21-bar section is based on the "Future" motive,10 which is in turn the basis for Cavaradossi's forthcoming aria, "E lucevan le stelle," and which will be the final motive heard at the end of the opera. The motive asserts itself only gradually over the course of

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9 In order, the pitches and distances for the church bells are b³ (lontanissimo), d⁵ (meno lontano), g⁴ (vicino), e⁵ (meno vicino), b⁷ (lontano), c⁷ (più vicino), f⁴ (lontano), f⁴ (meno lontano), b⁵ (più vicino), e⁵ (più lontano), d⁸ (vicino), and b⁵ (molto lontano).
10 Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 78.
three bars, first with the arrival of E minor, then with a tempo shift (to largo), and finally with a shift to 3/4 meter. During this section Puccini employs the exact pitch of St. Peter's largest bell, E below the bass staff, sounding it six times, thus presumably chiming the hour of the day.

Running almost eleven minutes in duration and 183 measures in length, the prelude to the third act of Madama Butterfly is the most extensive orchestral piece in all of Puccini's operas. Its formal construction, Intro A B A' Trans C, divides into two large units: the first, prior to the opening of the curtain, represents Butterfly's night vigil as she awaits Pinkerton's return and "mirrors her state of mind," and the second, with the rise of the curtain (4+2, just prior to the transition), paints the mood of the dawning morning. Thus, it is in the latter section that Puccini represents the time of day in the music.

The first stage directions after the curtain rises state that "Butterfly, still motionless, is gazing out into the distance; the child is asleep on a cushion; and Suzuki, kneeling bent over the child has also fallen asleep." Then, very quickly, the rhythmic motion of the A' section is suspended during a long pianissimo Bb9 chord as the transition begins. "From the bay, far away in the distance" (i.e., offstage) the call-and-response of sailors (tenors I and II) can be heard as they do their morning chores. The long chord, almost without tempo, shifts upward a half-step (to B9) for another set of calls, and then again (to C9) for a third set. The latter part of the transition, for orchestra alone, settles into F major, and the score calls for "clanging of chains, anchors, and other sounds from the harbor."

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11 See discussion of geographic settings below.
12 In the orchestral score identified as Atto Secondo Parte Seconda.
13 The next three orchestral pieces according to length are the prelude to Tosca/III, running more than seven minutes with 141 measures; the famous "Intermezzo" to Act III of Manon Lescaut, running around five-and-a-half minutes with 53 measures; and the prelude to Villi/II, "1.° Tempo: L'Abbandono," which runs a little less than five-and-a-half minutes with 87 measures.
14 Carner, Puccini, 427.
15 The accompaniment for the first two sets of calls is scored for clarinets and bassoons, while the accompaniment for the third set is scored for strings.
As section C begins, at 6, the spring morning becomes even more evident in the music. The meter changes to a dance-like 2/4, the tempo suddenly shifts to allegro moderato, quarter-note=112, and the tonality settles into a bright D major. The dynamics begin ppp ("come da lontano") and gradually progress, over some eighty-three measures, to fff, before slowly fading away to pianissimo, during the final twenty-two measures. The C section is dominated by what Macdonald calls the "Dawn" motive. This is a bustling disjunct motive that Puccini at times treats in two-voice imitation. Its initial arpeggio-like character seems to propel the motive forward, in a sense awakening the dawn or perhaps "trumpeting" its arrival. Immediately after its first statement, just as a brief statement of the "Butterfly" motive is presented (6+9), the score requests "bird calls from the garden" ("fischi d'uccelli dal giardino"), then, four bars later (7), in conjunction with newly composed motivic material, Puccini notes that "the first streaks of dawn appear in the sky" ("comincia l'alba"). At 8 there is another lighting designation, "the rosy dawn spreads" ("l'alba sorge rosea"), and six bars later "the day breaks" ("spunta l'aurora"). At this point the first four bars of the "Dawn" motive are presented four times in quick succession, on rising major thirds (B♭, D, F♯, B♭), further illustrating the rising of the sun. Finally, the last lighting designation for the opening of Act III states that "the sunshine streams [into the room] from outside" ("al di fuori risplende il sole"). At this point (11-11), as the sunlight moves from the exterior of Butterfly's house to its interior, Puccini introduces a new contrasting motive. The C section ends with a return to material from its beginning, including the "Dawn" motive.

One additional example of Puccini placing a temporal setting in the musical foreground is a passage that occurs near the end of Il Tabarro. The temporal setting of the beginning of this opera is "sunset," but it is not in any way illustrated musically; the

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16 Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 97.
17 Ibid., 86.
opening measures of the opera could just as easily describe early morning as early evening. However, towards the end of the opera (83+6 through 83+9), as Giorgetta begins to bid Michele goodnight, the tolling of the nine o'clock hour can be heard from a distant church ("da una chiesa lontana giungono i rintocchi della ore"); the ninth chime is struck as Giorgetta enters the cabin of the barge. Then, after two lovers pass by in the shadows of the street, "from a distant barracks a bugle is heard" ("una cornetta lontana suona il silenzio da una caserma"), signaling the end of the day (85+2 through 85+7). To underscore the ominous mood of night and to intensify the dramatic tension, Puccini sets the bugle-calls in B♭ major above a drone bass for the low strings in A minor, which had established itself ten measures prior to the entrance of the bugle.

2. Geographic Settings

The geographic settings of Puccini's operas may be studied on four levels, from the most general to the most particular: country, city/area, specific location, and interior versus exterior settings. While most of the operas change location from act to act (see below), the change tends to occur on the level of particular location. Only three operas move from city to city, and none changes country. (To be sure, Manon Lescaut moves from mainland France to the French colony of Louisiana.) Location changes occur only between acts, not within an act; the only exception is Turandot.

Northern France is by far the region of choice for Puccini's operatic settings.¹ Eight of the operas are set within this area (Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, La Rondine, and Il Tabarro), specifically in and to the north of Paris. A fifth opera (Edgar) is set in medieval Flanders, an area that would eventually become a part of extreme northwest France or its

¹Table 1 of Chapter 1 shows that six of Puccini's operas were based on plays and novels from French literature.
adjacent northern neighbor, western Belgium. Three of the operas are set in the composer's native Italy (Tosca, Suor Angelica, and Gianni Schicchi); two of these (Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi) are set within the west central region of Tuscany, near Puccini's native Lucca. The remaining four operas are set in locations that would seem exotic to Puccini: the Black Forest of southwest Germany (Le Villi), Japan (Madama Butterfly), the wild west of the United States (La Fanciulla del West), and China (Turandot).

It is interesting to consider the national settings from the point of view of what is missing. There are no Scandinavian settings or settings in the British Isles; neither are there any eastern European settings. Perhaps most surprisingly, there is not a single Mediterranean setting other than Act III of La Rondine, which overlooks the French Riviera, hardly what one envisions as truly Mediterranean (Spain, Southern France, apart from the Riviera, Southern Italy, Greece, the Middle East, Egypt, North Africa, or Morocco).¹⁹

Only Edgar, Manon Lescaut, and La Rondine change cities from beginning to end. In the case of Edgar, Act I is set in a small Flemish village, Act II somewhere in the Flemish countryside, and Act III near the city of Coutray.²⁰ All three of these settings are somewhat vague. With Manon Lescaut Puccini and his numerous librettists are more precise, as all four acts are set in or near specific cities. Act I is located in Amiens, Act II in Paris, Act III in Le Havre, and Act IV is located outside New Orleans. La Rondine has only two locations. Acts I and II are set in Paris, and Act III takes place on a hillside overlooking the French Riviera.

¹⁹Pietro Mascagni's very popular Cavalleria Rusticana (1890) is set in Sicily, and its success led several other composers to use this colorful region as a setting for their operas. Ruggiero Leoncavallo's Pagliacci (1893), set in the region of Calabria (just opposite Sicily, on the Italian mainland), is certainly the most famous example.

²⁰Coutray is now known as Kortrijk, Belgium. It is located about ten miles from the French border and was the site of the Battle of Spurs in 1302, the date of the opera's setting.
Two of the operas are each set in regional rather than city locations: *Le Villi* in the Black Forest, and *La Fanciulla del West* in California, in and around a mining camp near the foot of fictional "Cloudy Mountain," presumably in the Sierra Nevada range. Both remain in these regional locations throughout all acts.

The remaining operas are all set in or near a specific city, and their settings remain there throughout. The three one-act operas of *Il Trittico* are in this category: *Il Tabarro*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Gianni Schicchi* are set in Paris, Siena, and Florence respectively. Finally, Puccini's four most widely performed operas are also set in and around individual cities: *La Bohème* in and around Paris (mainly in the Latin Quarter), *Tosca* in Rome, *Madama Butterfly* on a hillside near Nagasaki, and *Turandot* in Peking.

The endings of the operas are about evenly divided between some type of rural setting, i.e., a setting other than a city (*Le Villi, Edgar, Manon Lescaut, Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West, La Rondine, and Suor Angelica*), and an urban setting. The five operas that have urban settings are all located in very populous and prominent cities: Paris (*La Bohème* and *Il Tabarro*), Rome (*Tosca*), Florence (*Gianni Schicchi*), and Peking (*Turandot*).

Table 2.4 summarizes the particular locations of the various acts of Puccini's operas. Only two operas conclude around specific non-fictional institutions and both are located in Italy. The third act of *Tosca* takes place on a platform of the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome, and *Suor Angelica* takes place in the convent of Santa Maria delle Cellule, near Siena. Of the other operas, three conclude in settings that combine fact and fiction. Act IV, like Act I, of *La Bohème* is set in a fictitious garret apartment located in the well-known Latin Quarter of Paris. Act III of *La Fanciulla del West* takes place near a fictitious mountain on the edge of the California Great Forest. A fictitious barge moored on the River Seine, in Paris, with the cathedral of Notre Dame in the background, is the location for *Il Tabarro*. The remaining operas end with fictional settings that are in reality
impossible to locate: outside the house of Guglielmo Wulf, somewhere in the Black Forest (Le Villi); a bastion of a fortress "near Coutray" (Edgar); a desolate plain ("Una landa sterminata...terreno brullo ed ondulato"), somewhere near New Orleans (Manon Lescaut); inside Butterfly's house, somewhere near Nagasaki (Madama Butterfly); outside a summer villa on the French Riviera (La Rondine); the bedchamber of Buoso Donati somewhere in Florence (Gianni Schicchi); and a big square in front of the imperial palace in Peking (Turandot).
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<th>Final act</th>
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<td>II. outside Guglielmo's house</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>I. main town square</td>
<td>III. bastion of a fortress</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. terrace of a palace</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>I. outside an inn</td>
<td>IV. desolate plain</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. Manon's boudoir in Geronte's house</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III. a prison at the port</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La Bohème</em></td>
<td>I. Garret apartment</td>
<td>IV. Garret apartment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. Latin Quarter, outside Café Momus</td>
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<td>III. Barrière d'Enfer, outside Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>I. inside the church of Sant' Andrea della Valle</td>
<td>III. platform of the Castel Sant' Angelo</td>
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<td>II. inside Scarpia's apartment at the Palazzo Farnese</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>I. outside house</td>
<td>III. inside house</td>
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<td>II. inside house</td>
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<td>III. edge of California Great Forest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. inside Minnie's cabin</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td>I. Magda's apartment</td>
<td>III. outside a villa</td>
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<td>II. ballroom at Bullier's</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>I. barge on River Seine</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td>I. convent of Santa Maria delle Cellule</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>I. bedchamber of Buoso Donati</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Turandot</em></td>
<td>I. main square of Peking pavilion</td>
<td>III/A. palace garden</td>
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<td>II/A. main square in front of imperial palace</td>
<td>III/B. main square in front of</td>
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<td>II/B. main square in front of imperial palace</td>
<td>imperial palace</td>
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Table 2.4: Geographic settings: particular locations

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Puccini's choice of particular settings shows a marked preference for locations in or near residences (sometimes temporary) of one or more of the characters. Twenty-one of the thirty-three locations shown in Table 2.4 are in or very near the place of residence of one of the characters. Only three operas do not begin in or near a principal character's home;\textsuperscript{21} on the other hand, in each of these three the second act does occur in the abode of one of the characters.\textsuperscript{22} Only four operas end someplace other than in or near a major character's home;\textsuperscript{23} three of these are the ones that do not begin in the residence of a principal character (\textit{Manon Lescaut}, \textit{Tosca}, and \textit{La Fanciulla del West}).

Of the eight operas that conclude near the residence of a character, only two have final acts that begin with principal male and female characters sharing that abode at that time. In Act III of \textit{La Rondine} Magda and Ruggero are living together in their summer villa, and in \textit{Il Tabarro} Giorgetta lives on the barge with her husband, Michele. In each case neither man nor woman dies, but each couple becomes estranged by the opera's conclusion. In the cases of \textit{Madama Butterfly}, \textit{Suor Angelica}, and \textit{Turandot}, the conclusion of the opera takes place in or around the residence of the title character. With \textit{Le Villi} and \textit{Gianni Schicchi} it is the father of the main female character who either already owns or eventually possesses the residence. In \textit{Le Villi}, the owner of the house is Guglieimo Wulf, Anna's father. At the beginning of \textit{Gianni Schicchi} the house is owned by the deceased Buoso Donati, but by the conclusion of the opera that owner is the cunning title character, the father of Lauretta. In the case of \textit{La Bohème} the residence, at the conclusion as well as the beginning, is that of the four male Bohemians: Rodolfo, Marcello, Schaunard, and Colline.

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Manon Lescaut}, outside an inn; \textit{Tosca}, inside a church; and \textit{La Fanciulla del West}, inside a saloon.

\textsuperscript{22} Manon/II, Manon's salon in Geronte's palace; Tosca/II, Scarpia's apartment in the Palazzo Farnese; and Fanciulla/II, Minnie's cabin on the hillside.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Edgar}, a bastion of a fortress; \textit{Manon Lescaut}, a desolate plain; \textit{Tosca}, a platform of a castle, and \textit{La Fanciulla del West}, the edge of a forest.
In spite of all the love (or perhaps lust) that is expressed to varying degrees in Puccini's operas, there are only two instances where the audience actually sees the primary couple (invariably a soprano and a tenor in all the operas) in cohabitation: the end of Act I of Madama Butterfly (Butterfly and Pinkerton) and the beginning of Act III of La Rondine (Magda and Ruggero). Perhaps not surprisingly, neither couples' happiness survives the opera's conclusion. Although the lovers passionately assert their ardor for each other in Le Villi, Edgar, Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West, Il Tabarro, Gianni Schicchi, and Turandot, none of these leading couples is ever depicted living together, regardless of their eventual bliss or despair. The audience is, however, shown several examples of subsidiary couples in varying levels of cohabitation: Edgar and Tigrana are living together at the beginning of Act II, Manon has her own boudoir at Geronte's house in Act II, Musetta and Marcello are living together temporarily at the inn during Act III of La Bohème, and Giorgetta continues to live with her estranged husband, Michele, in Il Tabarro.

At some point in every opera, a form of residence is shown for each heroine, with the exceptions of Fidelia (Edgar), Mimi (La Bohème), and Tosca. Although the audience never sees Lauretta's current residence, by the end of Gianni Schicchi her father possesses the Donati house, and it is therefore now also her residence. As for the heroes, the audience is never shown a residence for Roberto (Le Villi), Des Grieux (Manon Lescaut), Cavaradossi (Tosca), Johnson (La Fanciulla del West), Luigi (Il Tabarro), Rinuccio (Gianni Schicchi), or Calaf (Turandot). For two of these roles, however, the argument could be made that their residences are depicted. In the case of Rinuccio, he might have already been living at the Donati house before the beginning of the opera, and further, by the end of the opera his future father-in-law possesses the house; thus, the Donati house, if not already Rinuccio's residence, will soon become so. In the case of Calaf, since he wins
Turandot's heart, he becomes the son of the Emperor and thus resides in the imperial palace, the facade of which is the setting of the second scene of both Acts II and III.

Given Puccini's preference for residences as settings, it is perhaps surprising that he also prefers exteriors to interiors (see Table 2.5). Of the thirty-three locales (Acts II and III of Turandot each contain two parts, each part with its own location), twenty are exterior settings and thirteen are interior settings. Perhaps even more telling is Puccini's preference for ending his operas in the outdoors. Five of the twelve operas begin within confined interior walls (La Bohème, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West, La Rondine, and Gianni Schicchi), but only three conclude with an interior setting: La Bohème, Madama Butterfly, and Gianni Schicchi. Although the final two acts of Madama Butterfly are set in an interior space, the outdoor garden plays a prominent role in the action.24 In Gianni Schicchi the outdoor terrace, onto which Schicchi sent his daughter while plotting his sly plan, is finally seen at the end of the opera, when the large upstage window opens to reveal Rinuccio and Lauretta in an embrace. While the finale of La Bohème is the only opera that concludes strictly in an interior space, prominent reference is made in the score to a window through which the sun's rays shine.

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24In Act II Butterfly and Suzuki are seen gathering flowers from the garden, and in Act III there are specific stage directions for whom can be seen, at various times, in the garden. Kate Pinkerton is seen there long before her entrance into the house.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Ext</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>Ext, Ext</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>Ext, Int, Ext</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La Bohème</em></td>
<td>Int, Ext, Ext</td>
<td>Int</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>Int, Int</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>Ext, Int</td>
<td>Int</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La Fanciulla del West</em></td>
<td>Int, Int</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td>Int, Int</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td>Ext</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>Int</td>
<td>Ext</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Turandot</em></td>
<td>I: Ext</td>
<td>III/A: Ext</td>
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<td>II/A: Int</td>
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Table 2.5: Geographic locations: interior versus exterior

This leads to the final topic raised by Table 2.4 (Geographical settings: particular locations): the potential symmetry of beginning and ending an opera in the same location. Obviously the three one-acts fit this profile, as does *Le Villi*, which was originally conceived as a one-act work, but interestingly enough, *La Bohème* is the only multi-act opera other than *Le Villi* to begin and end in the same location.

In order to emphasize for the listener, aurally as well as visually, that the settings of Acts I and IV of *La Bohème* are identical, Puccini begins the final act of the opera with the same musical motive with which the opera began, thus, in a sense, scenically rounding off the opera. Macdonald labels this the "La Bohème" motive,²⁵ and it plays a prominent role throughout the opera; however, it is most prominent in Acts I and IV. The initial

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²⁵Macdonald, Puccini: *King of Verismo*, 51.
statements of the "La Bohème" motive in these two outer acts have much in common, including tonality (C major), meter (3/8), tempo (allegro vivace, dotted-quarter-note=108), and dynamic level (fortissimo). In fact, there are only two essential differences between these two initial statements. First, the length of time allotted to this motive at the beginning of Act IV is much less than at the beginning of Act I. In Act IV, only the main portion of the motive is presented, and only a single time, while at the beginning of Act I, the motive is extended by the repetition of several of its smaller motivic cells, as well as several repetitions of the motive as a whole in a variety of tonalities. In Act IV, Puccini uses this single statement to place the listener immediately back into the garret apartment of the four Bohemians from Act I; thus, it is a reminder of the setting for the listener. The other difference in the two initial statements is in their orchestration. The beginning of Act I is much more lightly scored than the beginning of Act IV. For example, the first four notes of the motive in Act I are scored for only two bassoons, celli, and double basses, while the same four notes in Act IV are scored for the entire orchestra, except for the harp but including the timpani. The effect of the heavier scoring at the beginning of Act IV is to give the listener a sense of the passage of time from the beginning of the opera to this point in the drama; the scoring informs us that the dramatic situation is not the same as it was earlier, yet the location is. William Ashbrook is correct in pointing out that "Puccini transforms [the motive's] earlier lighthearted air to one of strident desperation."26

Like the temporal settings, at times Puccini brings the geographic settings to the musical foreground. Some of the more obvious instances are the numerous authentic "exotic" melodies that Puccini incorporated into Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West, and Turandot, as well as his adaptations of melodic characteristics from each of these.

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various musical cultures. These features occur throughout the scores of these three operas, yet none of their acts begins with an overt musical representation of the exotic setting.

The third act of Tosca, on the other hand, though certainly not in an exotic setting from Puccini’s point of view, begins with perhaps Puccini’s most extensive use of musical material to set the specific geographic location of an act in any of his operas. This act is set on the ramparts of Rome’s Castel Sant’Angelo, with specific instructions in the score that the Vatican and St. Peter’s be visible in the background. In order to depict the location, Puccini wanted to reproduce the effect of the Matins bells rung from different churches in the area. To accomplish this, he made a special trip to Rome in late November of 1897, and in the early hours of the morning climbed the ramparts of the Castel Sant’Angelo in order to obtain a first-hand impression of the bewildering sound of the bells rung from the area churches to announce Matins. (See discussion of temporal settings, above, for specifics concerning Puccini’s use of the Matins bells. His use of Roman dialect in the shepherd’s song is discussed in Chapter 3, “Beginning of Final Acts.”) Also, through his long-time friend Don Pietro Panichelli, Puccini was able to learn the exact pitch of the largest bell at St. Peter’s, the campanone, which was determined to be E below the bass staff. As mentioned in the discussion of temporal settings, Puccini writes this exact low pitch for a solo bell during the prelude, thus musically setting the scene specifically at Castel Sant’Angelo, very near St. Peter’s.

27 Most Puccini scholars who analyze the melodies in the composer’s operas cite at least some of these. Carner discusses the exoticism of all three of these operas in rather admirable detail, at times even illustrating Puccini’s actual oriental and American sources and describing his adaptations of melodic characteristics borrowed from the musical characteristics of Japan, America, and China. See Carner, Puccini, 414-17, for Madama Butterfly; 456-61, for La Fanciulla del West; and 521-28, for Turandot.
28 Ashbrook, Operas of Puccini, 71.
29 The exact pitch of the campanone was established, according to Carner, “not without difficulty, on account of the powerful overtones” by one Maestro Meluzzi, an elderly Roman musician at St. Peter’s. Puccini, 116. See also Carteggi Pucciniani, ed. Eugenio Gara (Milano: Ricordi, 1958), 157-58.
The opening measures to *Il Tabarro* also musically depict the location of the opera. The opening orchestral figures vividly depict the River Seine and also include sounds from the bustling Parisian locale: "a long whistle... from the siren of a tugboat" (at 2-8), "a distant automobile horn" (at 2+2), and a "distant tugboat whistle" (at 2+3).

One final example is *Suor Angelica*. In a way quite similar to the methods the composer uses in his "oriental" operas, Puccini incorporates throughout the score various musical motives and colors that one would associate with life in a convent. The score is marked by melodic steps reminiscent of plainsong, modal turns, litany-like passages built around a few notes, and *organum*-like progressions. As Carner correctly notes, all of these "form part of Puccini's normal style, but here they are applied to a strictly authentic purpose."\(^{30}\) Another characteristic evoking the religious setting is the *a cappella* presentation of some of the nuns' choruses.

Two of the most obvious places in the score where Puccini employs his theatrical church style are at the beginning and at the end of the opera. The opening piece of *Suor Angelica* is a chorus, an "Ave Maria" sung by the nuns. It is based on nine statements of a four-bar ostinato in F major, and it is set in a slow (*andante moderato*, quarter-note=52) quadruple meter. This quite *legato* and dynamically subdued piece is sung offstage (from the chapel) and begins with only the chimes, which monophonically present the initial statement of the ostinato. The second statement is scored for celeste and *pianissimo* high strings, which create a rather heavenly impression, and as the piece continues, an organ is also added to give it an even more religious, although earthly, quality.

The final piece of the opera, a pezzo concertato for Angelica and an offstage chorus of "voci degli angeli," is based on three verses of a strophic hymn to the Virgin Mary. It is in C major and quadruple meter, with a moderately slow tempo (*andante appena mosso*, quarter-note=72). Like the opening prayer, it is very *legato*. Also, the instrumentation is

again quite "heavenly" or ethereal, with prominent use of bells, celeste, harp, and high strings, as well as colorful offstage instruments, which include two pianos, an organ, three horns, and additional bells.

3. Summary

Puccini used a great variety of temporal and geographic settings throughout his operas, and he generally took great care to indicate them verbally in the scores, as well as occasionally indicating them via the music itself. Puccini seems to have preferred opera plots that are set in and around northern France (specifically Paris), Italy, or in some exotic locale (Japan, China, or America); and which take place in either the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. There are no Puccini operas set in the region surrounding the Mediterranean sea (apart from a single act set at the French Riviera), and only three of his operas are set earlier than the 1800s. Turandot takes place in legendary times.

The events within any single act (with the exception of Turandot) occur in a single location and unfold in "real time"; that is, time is in no way telescoped for the theatre. Varying amounts of time pass between acts; even so, the stories of all of the operas take place within the time frame of a single year, with the exception of Madama Butterfly and the probable exception of Manon Lescaut. In addition, the entire dramatic action in Tosca, Turandot, and the three one-act operas takes place within less than twenty-four hours. Most of the operas conclude in the spring and during the late-afternoon to early-morning hours. Only two operas conclude in the blazing sunlight of morning or midday, La Bohème and Madama Butterfly.

Throughout all of the acts in his operas, Puccini preferred specific geographic settings in or around the residence of one of the major characters. This is also true of finales: only four—Edgar, Manon Lescaut, Tosca, and La Fanciulla del West—conclude some place other than near a principal's home. Puccini also preferred exterior settings to
those confined by interior walls. Even two of the three operas that do conclude with interior settings incorporate prominent exterior portions as well (the garden in *Madama Butterfly* and the terrace in *Gianni Schicchi*). Only the final act of *La Bohème* is set strictly in an interior, and it is the only opera to conclude with exactly the same interior setting with which it began.

Finally, in several places in the scores, Puccini brings the temporal and geographic settings to the musical foreground. In the introductory orchestral passages to the final acts of both *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini paints aural pictures of the early morning, and near of the end of *Il Tabarro* the exact hour of day can be heard chiming from a distant bell-tower. As many scholars have noted, Puccini uses fragments of native melodies to aid in setting the locale for the three "exotic" operas (*Madama Butterfly*, *La Fanciulla del West*, and *Turandot*). In addition, during the opening moments of the third act of *Tosca*, set in "non-exotic" Rome, he uses church bells and a song in Roman dialect to lend local color and in the beginning moments of *Il Tabarro* can be heard the sounds of the Parisian locale. Perhaps Puccini's most striking use of music to aid in the setting of a scene occurs at the beginning of the final act of *La Bohème*, where exactly the same motivic material, set in almost the very same way, is used to place this final act in the same location as that of the beginning of the opera.
CHAPTER 3

BEGINNINGS OF FINAL ACTS

The beginning moments of the final acts of the nine multi-act Puccini operas display several telling characteristics of the composer's musical and dramatic style. In the following discussion the opening moments of these acts will be examined with regard to the first aural impression they make, usually found in an instrumental prelude; the relationships of the first aural impression to visual activity; the arrival or postponement of tonal closure near the beginning of the act; the numbers of characters onstage at the outset of the acts, and the nature of their music; and the initial tonality of the acts. When appropriate, the final dramatic divisions of the one-act operas (as defined in Chapter 1) are considered as well.

1. First impression

The audience's first impression of any operatic act is aural (the music begins before the curtain goes up), visual (the curtain goes up before the music begins), or both (the curtain goes up and the music begins simultaneously). In Puccini's case no final act of the multi-act operas begins with a solely visual first impression (see Table 3.1). The only instance of this situation in any act of all of Puccini's operas is the beginning of the one-act Il Tabarro, where the score specifies that the curtain is to be raised prior to the beginning of the music. There are two final acts in which Puccini creates simultaneous visual and aural
impressions on the audience by having the curtain rise as the music begins. The first is Bohème/IV, where the score notes that this final act is to begin just as Act I had begun ("come nel Quadro Primo"), with a quickly rising curtain on measure one ("s'alza subito la tela"). As noted in Chapter 2, the opening music and introductory dramatic situations for the two acts are essentially the same, though time has passed. (The dramatic situation of Bohème/IV will be discussed further below.) The other instance is Act III of Turandot. In this case the score gives no allusion to a previous situation and no detailed specific directions. The only direction is "velario" (curtain) over the upbeat to measure one. This direction occurs only in the orchestral score, not the piano-vocal score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aural (music starts before curtain rises)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II</td>
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<td>Edgar/III</td>
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<td>Manon/IV</td>
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<td>Tosca/III</td>
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<td>Butterfly/III</td>
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<td>Fanciulla/III</td>
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<th>Visual (curtain rises before music starts)</th>
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<th>Aural and visual (curtain rises with downbeat)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV</td>
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<td>Turandot/III</td>
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Table 3.1: Aural versus visual first impressions of final acts
Seven of the final acts first make an aural impression on the audience, before the
curtain rises to reveal the setting of the act and the dramatic action. There are various
procedures for handling these aural first impressions and their relationship to the eventual
visual impression. First of all, there is great variation in the length of time that transpires
from the first orchestral sound to the raising of the curtain—from about ten seconds to
more than seven minutes. These pre-curtain "preludes" fall into two broad time categories.
The most common group includes acts whose curtains rise less than roughly forty-five
seconds into the music: Manon/IV, Tosca/III, Fanciulla/III, and Rondine/III. The briefest
such prelude begins Manon/IV, in which approximately ten seconds elapse before the
audience sees the desolate landscape. As Manon/IV is the shortest of the final acts, it is not
surprising that Puccini wants to proceed quickly into the action.

The other group, in which the curtain remains lowered for longer than two minutes,
comprises Villi/II, Edgar/III, and Butterfly/III, and in each case the composer employs a
different approach. The briefest of these longer preludes, in which a little more than two
minutes elapse before the audience sees any stage action, is the second act to Le Villi.
However, in this case the initial visual impression is incomplete: the first visual impression
of Villi/II, Anna's funeral procession, is deliberately blurred behind a scrim. The audience
is finally given full view of the set roughly three-and-a-half minutes later (almost five-and-
a-half minutes into the act), at the conclusion of this orchestral piece and the beginning of
the next (a ballet: see below). At the other extreme is Butterfly/III. More than seven
minutes of music occurs before the curtain finally rises, with the entire prelude running
almost eleven minutes. This piece is a musical depiction of Butterfly's night vigil waiting
for Pinkerton's return. With the first stirrings of dawn, the curtain rises on the same scene
that concluded Act II, six or seven hours later. While the piece is tonally closed, the
introduction of visual imagery and offstage voices well before its conclusion (see below)
obscures its independence from the action.
With Edgar/III, Puccini employs a traditional, independent, musically closed prelude, to which he in fact affixes the label "Preludio."¹ This 48-bar piece, beginning in B♭ minor, runs a little more than three-and-a-half minutes, and after its conclusion, in B♭ major, the curtain rises on the downbeat of the next item. Although this prelude is formally independent, it is so thematically linked to the first scene of the act, the "Requiem" scene, that it could be viewed as an introduction to the scene rather than the act as a whole. Its form is Intro A Trans1 B Trans2 A' B' Coda, with the A sections based on the "Edgar's Regrets" motive,² first heard in Act II and not heard again after this prelude, and the B sections based on the "Farewell to Edgar" motive,³ which plays a major role in the forthcoming funeral procession for Edgar.⁴ In essence, the Edgar/III prelude musically links the dramatic action in Act II with that in Act III, thus forming a bridge between the two rather dramatically disjunct acts.

Whether the curtain is up or down, all of the final acts of the nine multi-act operas begin with some type of instrumental prelude, either tonally closed or not. (The following discussion will consider the arrival or postponement of tonal closure, as well as the nature of the preludes.) Once the curtain is up, each also includes some type of opening pantomime. Table 3.2 organizes the beginnings of these acts into four characteristic dispositions: (A) final acts that begin with a tonally closed prelude (the curtain may be open or closed); (B) final acts that begin with a tonally open prelude (i.e., an open-ended instrumental prelude of any length; the curtain may be open or closed); (C) preludes that accompany some type

¹There is only one other piece so labeled in Puccini's operas: the "Preludio" to Act I of Le Villi. The "prelude" to Manon/III is an independent piece that Puccini has labeled "Intermezzo."
³Ibid., 37.
⁴Edgar is actually not dead but disguised as monk. The funeral is a hoax, in which Edgar and Frank hope to ensnare the rather amoral Tigrana.
of pantomime with no offstage sounds; and (D) preludes that accompany some type of pantomime, with additional offstage sound accompanying that action. Dispositions A and B are mutually exclusive, as are dispositions C and D.
**Tonally closed preludes**

**Villi/II/1:** "1°. Tempo: L'Abbandono" (curtain up m. 38, to reveal scrim): 87 mm.
**Villi/II/2:** "2°. Tempo: "La Tregenda" (scrim up m. 1): 230 mm.
**Edgar/III/1:** "Preludio" (curtain closed): 47 mm.
**Tosca/III:** independent prelude (curtain up m. 15): 145 mm.
**Butterfly/III:** independent prelude (curtain up m. 53): 183 mm.

**Tonally open preludes**

**Villi/II/3:** "Preludio e Scena" (curtain already up): 32 mm. (total for set piece: 133) — leads directly into the vocal entrance of Guglielmo.
**Edgar/III/2:** prelude to chorus (curtain immediately up): 7 mm. (total for set piece: 35) — leads directly into the choral entrance.
**Manon/IV:** prelude to dialogue ensemble (curtain up m. 3): 7 mm. (total for set piece: 31) — leads directly into the vocal entrance of Des Grieux.
**Bohème/IV:** prelude to transient passage (curtain immediately up): 10 mm. (total for transient passage: 83) — begins similarly to prelude to Act I; leads directly into the vocal entrance of Marcello.
**Fanciulla/III:** prelude to dialogue ensemble (curtain up m. 7): 20 mm. (total for set piece: 53) — leads directly into the vocal entrance of Nick.
**Rondine/III:** prelude to dialogue ensemble (curtain up m. 12): 14 mm. (total for set piece: 113) — leads directly into the vocal entrance of Magda.
**Turandot/III:** independent prelude (curtain immediately up): 65 mm. — leads directly into the brief orchestral introduction to Calaf's aria.

continued on next page

**Table 3.2:** Disposition of the opening of the final acts of the multi-act operas
Preludes accompanying some type of pantomime, with no offstage sounds

Villi/II/1:  "1°. Tempo: L'Abbandono": Anna’s funeral procession (behind scrim).
Villi/II/2:  "2°. Tempo: La Tregenda": dance of the Villi (ballet).
Villi/II/3:  "Preludio e Scena": Guglielmo enters, sits outside his house.
Edgar/III/2: prelude to chorus: officer places four sentinels near catafalque and four pages place lit candles around it, while funeral procession enters.
Manon/IV:  prelude to dialogue ensemble: Manon and Des Grieux advance slowly from the back.
Bohème/IV: prelude to transient passage: Marcello painting, Rodolfo writing.
Fanciulla/III: prelude to dialogue ensemble: Rance and Nick seated by fire, warming themselves.
Rondine/III: prelude to dialogue ensemble: Magda and Ruggero having tea.

Preludes accompanying some type of pantomime in which additional offstage sound accompanies that action

Tosca/III:  independent prelude: shepherd sings offstage (empty stage) with sheep bells tinkling in distance, church bells; entrance of jailer; entrance of police squad with Cavaradossi; exit of police squad.
Butterfly/III: independent prelude: offstage chorus of sailors; Butterfly watches for Pinkerton, Suzuki and child asleep.
Turandot/III: independent prelude: offstage heralds (8) and chorus; Calaf sits alone on stage listening to the far away voices.
The five tonally closed preludes are all long enough to be considered independent pieces, yet they are all attached to the drama to varying degrees. Each of the four concluding acts represented in this category presents a unique situation. Perhaps Puccini's most peculiar procedure occurs with Villi/II, where the act begins with three instrumental pieces that, each in its own way, function as preludes. The first two are tonally closed independent pieces, while the third is left tonally open and serves as the introduction to Guglielmo's aria. All three serve different dramatic purposes, and never again did Puccini place so much musical and dramatic weight on such a series of orchestral pieces in his operas. To help clarify the plot, Puccini and his librettist, Ferdinando Fontana, placed brief poems in front of each of the first two preludes, and the composer gave the two pieces descriptive titles. To further complicate the matter, however, many Puccini scholars have labeled these two pieces "intermezzi," perhaps in response to the opera's original one-act conception. Nevertheless, the fact of the matter is that the only designations that Puccini has affixed to these items, other than their descriptive titles, are "1°. Tempo" (andante poco mosso) and "2°. Tempo" (allegro non troppo).

The first prelude to Act II of Le Villi, No. 6 in Puccini's numbering of the pieces, is given the title "L'Abbandono" ("The Abandonment"), and it serves to inform the audience of Anna's death, which has occurred between the two acts. This orchestral piece, in F major, also includes the voices of an offstage female chorus (SSSAA), who sing a serene little requiem-like hymn in honor of the deceased maiden. As the song concludes, the

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5 This brings to mind the well-known and only reference to Puccini in all of Verdi's correspondence: "I've heard the composer Puccini is highly spoken of.... He follows the modern trends, which is natural, but he keeps to melody which is neither ancient nor modern. However, the symphonic vein appears to predominate in him. No harm in that, but one needs to tread carefully here. Opera is opera and symphony is symphony, and I don't think it's a good thing to put a symphonic piece into an opera merely to put the orchestra through its paces." Julian Budden, Verdi (Master Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie) (New York: Schirmer Books, 1995), 130. This is a quotation from a letter to Verdi's longtime friend, the music critic Count Opprandino Arrivabene (d. 1886), that appears in Verdi intimo: Carteggio di Giuseppe Verdi con il Conte Opprandino Arrivabene (1861-1886) (Verona: 1931), 311-315.

6 As mentioned above, in Manon Lescaut Puccini does in fact use the term "intermezzo" for the orchestral piece that precedes Act III.
curtain opens to reveal Anna's funeral procession as it leaves Guglielmo's house and crosses the stage into the wings. This dumbshow is set behind a scrim, giving the illusion of a dreamlike state, perhaps to separate it from the action to come. After the procession leaves the stage, the women's voices are again heard intoning the final poetic line of the song, "O pura virgo, requiesce in pace!," and the piece comes to a placid conclusion, with t V7-I cadence followed by silence.

With the beginning of the second "prelude," Puccini's No. 7, entitled "La Tregenda" ("The Witches' Sabbath"), the scrim rises to finally reveal the winter setting of Act II; here the mode changes to minor, and the key rises a major second (to G). This piece, although not identified as such, is a ballet number in which the Villi (the ghosts of young girls who have died of broken hearts) dance wildly among wills-o'-the-wisp (male spirits). It is in a rollicking 2/4 that feels like 6/8. From the point of view of musical structure, this is the actual beginning of the act, for the same material returns at the end of the act in its original key of G minor, rounding off the unit as a whole. It can be said, moreover, that this is the true beginning of the act from a dramatic point of view as well, for the action in this piece happens at the time of the remainder of the act, whereas the piece immediately preceding serves to explain what has occurred between the acts. It should furthermore be noted that this second prelude serves dramatically to establish who the "Villi" are; prior to the little verse that precedes this piece, they have not been mentioned even once in the libretto.

The third prelude to Villi/II is the orchestral introduction to Guglielmo's aria, "No! possibil non è... Anima santa della figlia mia," which Puccini labeled as "Preludio e Scena" (No. 8). In the formal scheme of the aria, which is A B (=a b a') C (=a b a'), the "prelude" is section A, and it runs almost a minute in duration. Dramatically, it ushers the grief-stricken Guglielmo out of his house, where he takes a seat by the door. This orchestral
passage, in C minor, ends with a, diminished-seventh chord (vii\(^{6}\)/V), followed by silence, thus preparing the way for Guglielmo's vocal entrance at section B, which begins with unaccompanied recitative.

With Act III of *Edgar*, Puccini makes similar use of multiple pieces that function as preludes, in this case two; however, the situation is much less complicated than in *Le Villi*. The first prelude to Edgar/III, as discussed above, is a traditional independent introductory orchestral piece, tonally closed (in B\(^{b}\) major) and played entirely in front of a closed curtain, with no accompanying stage action or offstage sounds. It ends with a V\(^{7}\)-I cadence followed by silence. The second prelude begins with the rise of the curtain and accompanies a rather brief onstage dumbshow, in which an unnamed officer places several sentinels near the catafalque, and four pages place candles around it, all while a funeral procession slowly enters. Musically, this seven-measure prelude in B\(^{b}\) minor (i.e., same key as the first prelude but minor mode), is the instrumental introduction to the dirge-like chorus, "Requiem æternam!" Structurally, it is the A section of the piece and its tonally open ending leads directly into the choral entrance, at the beginning of section B.\(^7\)

The preludes to the third acts of *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly* are similar in length and dramatic purpose. In both cases the pieces begin before the curtain is raised, and in each case the curtain rises during the piece. As explained in Chapter 2, both are atmosphere-setting pieces, during which relatively little dramatic action takes place, and both include offstage voices. When the curtain rises on the third act of *Tosca*, no characters are onstage,\(^8\) and the audience hears the plaintive offstage song of a young shepherd accompanied by the tinkling of his sheep's bells. As distant morning church bells are heard, the action finally begins with the entrance of the jailer and the subsequent

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\(^7\)The full structure of the piece is A B A' B' A" B" A"" B"".

\(^8\)A lone mute sentry can be seen (upstage) patrolling the castle's wall. In essence, he is a part of the scenery.
entrance of Cavaradossi escorted by a squad of soldiers. The prelude ends with a V\(^7\)-i
cadence, then the cadential chord is held while the jailer sings his opening words. During a
brief silence the squad exits, after which the jailer continues in the same key (E minor).
When the curtain rises during the Butterfly/III prelude, Butterfly, Suzuki, and the child
(Dolore) are on stage, in the same positions where they were last seen at the end of Act II.
The offstage voices are those of sailors doing their morning jobs in the distant harbor, and
as the piece comes to an end, it reaches a complete stop—a iii-I cadence followed by
silence—before Suzuki utters the first word of the act.

The brief open-ended prelude that begins Bohème/IV is the first section of the
multi-sectional transient passage that opens the final act. As in the first act of La Bohème,
the curtain rises as the music for Act IV begins, and this brief orchestral unit immediately
sets the mood for the forthcoming dialogue of Rodolfo and Marcello. It accompanies
essentially the same type of action that opened Act I and, as in Act I, it comes to a complete
stop before Marcello sings his first line. Yet, there are three major differences between
these two similar instrumental openings. The first is that the Act I prelude is attached to a
set piece, a dialogue ensemble for Rodolfo and Marcello, not only as an introductory unit,
but also as a structurally recurring section, whereas the Act IV prelude introduces a
transient passage (a classic scena) and does not recur. The Act IV prelude is, in fact, much
briefer than the corresponding unit in Act I, ten measures versus thirty-eight. And finally,
even though the Act I prelude functions as an introduction to a larger structure, it is tonally
closed, beginning and ending in C major. The Act IV prelude begins exactly the same way
as the Act I prelude, in C major, but abruptly shifts to E major, giving the listener the
impression that not all is well with the two young Bohemians.⁹ (The scena itself will end on a half-cadence in C major, followed by a rest with a fermata; the ensuing duet is in C major.)

Of the four open-ended preludes not already discussed, three are attached to opening dialogue ensembles and function musically merely as introductory segments of these set pieces (Manon/IV, Fanciulla/III, and Rondine/III).¹⁰ The briefest of these belongs to Manon/IV. It is only seven measures in length and lasts less than twenty seconds, yet it perfectly sets the despairing mood for the act. It is in F♯ minor and 3/4 meter. Its tempo is andante sostenuto, quarter-note=58, and the dynamics twice surge and ebb from pianissimo to fortissimo and back, while the harmony also twice progresses from i to bVII to i. The curtain rises in the third measure, and the audience sees Manon and Des Grieux staggering onto the stage, lost on a desolate plain outside New Orleans. Puccini later uses this same musical figure at the peroration of the act, as Des Grieux falls onto the corpse of Manon. This brief musical idea is derived from the first two notes of the "Manon" motive,¹¹ which is first heard in Act I and is then heard at least twice in each of the remaining acts.

The final open-ended prelude is that of Turandot/III, during which one hears the offstage voices of eight heralds (tenors) and the general populace (STB). It is long enough to be an independent set piece and, in fact, it is; however, it does not come to a cadence but instead progresses directly into the next set piece, Calaf's famous aria "Nessun dorma!"

The tonality of this 65-measure prelude is complex, as its structural units alternate between

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⁹See Chapter 2 regarding scoring, as well as presentation of the "La Bohème" motive, in these two passages.
¹⁰The opening dialogue ensemble of Rondine/III ends with a V⁷-I cadence, followed by silence, and the ensuing component begins in the same key as the cadence. That of Fanciulla/III ends with tonal ambiguity (I-♭VII-♭I in D), and this cadence is elided with the beginning of the next item. In Manon/IV the initial dialogue ensemble (for Manon and Des Grieux), in F♯ minor, merely breaks off mid-phrase, with a single pitch (A) holding through the beginning of the ensuing transient passage, which begins with indeterminate tonality that soon progresses to G minor.
¹¹Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo., 40.
harmonic bitonality and melodic modality.\textsuperscript{12} Its meter is 6/8, and its tempo, like its harmony, also alternates structurally, between \textit{andante mosso}, \textit{misterioso}, dotted-quarter-note=44, and \textit{molto sostenuto}, dotted quarter-note=40. The final chord of the piece is a $v^6_4$ of G major, the tonality of the ensuing aria.

2. Onstage personages

Examination of the personages on stage at the beginning of the final acts of the multi-act operas, as well as the final major dramatic divisions of the three one-act operas, reveals Puccini's marked preference for avoiding superfluous characters and populating the stage with only one or two important individuals. Eight of the twelve final acts or dramatic divisions literally fit this generalization. Only Edgar/III is truly exceptional (see Table 3.3).

\textsuperscript{12}The form of this piece is A B A' B' A'' B'' with each of the A sections following the pattern D minor/C$^\sharp$ major to B$^\flat$ minor/A major to A minor/G$^\sharp$ major and all of the B sections having a melodic line centered in G Dorian.
A limited number of principals
Manon/IV Manon, Des Grieux
Bohème/IV Rodolfo, Marcello
Butterfly/III Butterfly, Suzuki, Dolore (mute)
Fanciulla/III Rance, Nick a
Rondine/III Magda, Ruggero
Tabarro/B Giorgetta, Luigi
Angelica/C Angelica
Schicchi/B Schicchi, Relatives (eight functioning as one) b
Turandot/III Calaf

A group of collective mute characters, quickly replaced by a limited number of principals
Villi/II a. mourners (mute while on stage) c
  b. Villi, Wills-o'-the-Wisp (dancers)
  c. Guglielmo
Tosca/III a. empty stage (with lone mute sentry)
  b. jailer, squad of soldiers (mute), sergeant (mute), Cavaradossi (mute)
  c. jailer, Cavaradossi

A group of collective mute characters, quickly replaced by a large chorus and principals
Edgar/III a. official, sentinels, 4 pages (all mute)
  b. chorus of boys, monks, soldiers, townspeople, Fidelia, Gualtiero, Frank, Edgar (disguised as Il Frate)

a Although they are not mentioned in either the orchestral or piano-vocal score, the libretto reports that Ashby, Billy, and five other men are asleep upstage, along with three horses. They never move during the entire opening scene and are therefore, in essence, part of the scenery.
b The corpse of Buoso Donati is also onstage on his deathbed.
c See below.

Table 3.3: Onstage personages at the beginnings of the final acts of the multi-act operas and the final dramatic divisions of the one-act operas
The final dramatic division of *Suor Angelica* and the third act of *Turandot* both begin with a single character on stage, Angelica and Calaf respectively. Five concluding acts or dramatic divisions begin with two characters on stage, and in three of these cases those individuals make up the primary soprano-tenor love interest of the plot: Manon and Des Grieux (Manon/IV), Magda and Ruggero (Rondine/III), and Giorgetta and Luigi (Tabarro/B). It is interesting that each of these three couples is at a different point in the development of their relationship. The love of Manon and Des Grieux is still aflame, but their predicament, immediately evident to the audience, will soon extinguish it. On the other hand, Magda and Ruggero are in a complete state of euphoria as the act begins. Finally, Giorgetta and Luigi are still secretly planning their rendezvous.

In the other two cases the pair alone on stage together are a tenor and a baritone: Rodolfo and Marcello (Bohème/IV), and Nick and Rance (Fanciulla/III). The beginning of Bohème/IV exactly parallels the beginning of Act I: the two friends are alone together in their garret apartment. The relationship between Rance and Nick, however, is less immediately obvious. Earlier in the opera the sheriff Rance has expressed his love, or at least his lust, for Minnie; it thus makes perfect dramatic sense for Rance to be present. But what of Nick, the bartender of the saloon? Why is Nick with Rance, rather than one of the other men from the camp? There is no indication in the libretto that these two men are friends, but there is strong evidence that Nick, too, loves Minnie, although his is a more brotherly love. He is, after all, Minnie’s employee; and it is apparent from the dialogue that there is a genuinely warm relationship between the two, different from Minnie’s more motherly relationship with most of the miners. Therefore, it does matter dramatically that it

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\(^{13}\)As mentioned in Table 3.3, the libretto (but neither the orchestral score nor the piano-vocal score) notes that Ashby, Billy, and five other men are asleep upstage and never move during the entire opening scene.
is Nick, rather than one of the other men of the camp, who joins Rance in expressing frustration with the relationship between Minnie and Johnson. Moreover, at the end of the opera it is solely Nick whom Minnie innocuously kisses good-bye.

While the final act of *Madama Butterfly* opens with three characters on stage—Butterfly, Suzuki, and Dolore (the child)—the scene is really a dialogue between two characters. As the curtain rises, Dolore is asleep and remains so as he is carried off stage; he functions more as a stage prop than a character. A similar explanation can be made regarding *Gianni Schicchi*. As the second half begins, there are nine characters on stage: Schicchi and the eight relatives of Buoso Donati.\(^{14}\) However, the eight relatives function dramatically at this point in the score as a single entity, singing all their lines in unison. Therefore, the scene is a conversation between only two "voices": Schicchi and the greedy relatives.

Two of the final acts have group pantomime as a prelude to the actual beginning of dramatic speech. As explained above, the second act of *Le Villi* in truth has three beginnings ("preludes"). The first prelude, which functions as an entr'acte, includes a depiction of a group of silent mourners behind a scrim. The second "prelude" is a ballet for the voiceless Villi and Will-o'-the-Wisp, represented by dancers. Finally, the action of the drama gets underway with the solo entrance of Guglielmo. Act III of *Tosca* presents a unique situation in that the curtain rises on an empty stage, which remains so for a rather long time.\(^{15}\) Eventually, the jailer enters, and a squad of soldiers, with its sergeant, brings Cavaradossi on and then exits. All of this is portrayed in vocal silence, to the accompaniment of the prelude, and as the prelude concludes, only the jailer and Cavaradossi are left on stage.

\(^{14}\) As noted in Table 3.3, the dead body of Buoso Donati is also still onstage on his deathbed.  
\(^{15}\) As noted earlier, as part of the scenery a lone mute sentry can be seen patrolling the wall of the castle.
The only true exception to Puccini's normal method of beginning the final act with only a few important characters on stage is Edgar/III. As the curtain rises, the mute personages of a military official, several sentinels, and four pages are seen around the catafalque. Eventually a chorus of anonymous boys, monks, soldiers, and townspeople enter to the strains of a Requiem. Included in this throng of people are several principals (Frank, Fidelia, Gualtiero, and Edgar, disguised as a monk), but they are not distinguished from the crowd until several minutes later. Moreover, even as the dramatic light finally singles out the principals, the crowd remains on stage. In fact, more than half of the act progresses before any of the principals are left alone on stage.

The beginnings of five terminal acts include some amount of offstage singing (see Table 3.4), generally for chorus but in one case (Tosca/III) for the solo treble voice of a shepherd boy. The offstage piece in Tosca/III is the most substantial; it is a complete folksong-like song of six phrases. While it is sung, the stage is empty (apart from the aforementioned sentry); it serves to set the atmosphere and establish the early morning hour. The text of this little song, in Roman dialect, was provided to Puccini by Luigi Zanazzo (1860-1911), a Roman poet and librarian at the Ministero dell'Instruzione Pubblica, who was a specialist in Roman dialect. Puccini sent a sample quatrain to a lifelong friend from his childhood, Alfredo Vandini, who was a government official in Rome at the time of the composition of Tosca, to indicate the rhythm of the tune that the composer had already written. Vandini then contacted Zanazzo for Puccini and subsequently forwarded the text of the song to the composer.16 While the text mimics

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humanistic love-poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which was typically put into the mouths of shepherds, it also refers to the current relationship of Tosca and Cavaradossi.\(^{17}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villi/II</th>
<th>mourners (SSSAA)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III</td>
<td>boys, monks, soldiers, townspeople (SSTTBB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III</td>
<td>shepherd boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III</td>
<td>sailors (TT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III</td>
<td>8 heralds (T), the crowd (STB)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4: Beginnings of final acts that include offstage singing

Three of the final acts that begin with offstage choral singing employ it during an instrumental prelude. During the first prelude to Villi/II the following series of actions occurs: the mourners sing their first music in the wings prior to the raising of the curtain, then, upon their appearance (as they leave Guglielmo's house), they silently traverse the stage, and finally, after having exited, they sing the conclusion of the prelude likewise from the wings. The choral section of the Butterfly/III prelude is extremely brief, only eight measures in length. As in Tosca/III, this vocal passage is employed strictly for atmospheric purposes; it is nothing more than two groups of sailors calling to each other in the distant harbor. Their calls consist of the nonsense syllables "Oh eh!", essentially an

\(^{17}\)The text is, 'Io de' sospiri, te ne rimanno tanti... Pe' quante foje ne smoveno li venti... Tu mme [sic] disprezzi, io me ciaoro. Lampena d'oro, me fai morir!' ("I send you so many sighs...as many as there are leaves moved by the winds. You scorn me, I suffer for it. Golden light of my life you make me die!")
Italian version of the English "Heave ho!" Two separate ensembles are employed as offstage voices in the prelude to Turandot/III: eight tenors representing the heralds, and the entire chorus (STB) representing La Folla (the crowd). On three separate occasions the heralds announce Turandot's decree that no one can sleep until the name of the unknown prince has been discovered, and each time the crowd echoes a portion of the decree. As the prelude continues, the offstage voices grow fainter and fainter as the heralds move away from the palace grounds.

The remaining terminal act to include offstage voices does so in a manner that reverses that of Turandot/III. In Edgar/III the large chorus of children, monks, soldiers, and townspeople (SSTTBB) begin softly in the distance and then proceed to increase their dynamic level as they come onto the stage. This is not a case of offstage choral voices punctuating an instrumental prelude; rather, it is the beginning of an actual choral piece. As noted above, this is the only instance of a chorus that begins a final act in any of Puccini's operas.

Indeed, Edgar/III is the only terminal act (or final dramatic division to a one-act) in which people other than a principal character sing the first onstage line. This chorus is an example of stage music—i.e., music taking place within the action of the drama. At the beginning of the third act of Edgar, a chorus of boys, monks, soldiers, and townspeople intone a Latin Requiem in memory of Edgar as they process onto the stage. The first line sung onstage, "In pace factus est locus ejus!" ("In peace he has taken rest!"), is sung by the young boys and then immediately taken up by the adult chorus. The first line for a solo principal is sung by Fidelia during the second chorus of the "Requiem" scene and is an

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18 The first vocal line of the act, "Requiem aeternam!," which, as mentioned above, is intoned offstage, is also sung by the boys' chorus.
outpouring of emotion, an expression of her private thoughts rather than a communication to the other characters: "Non basta il pianto al mio dolor, o Edgar, mio solo amor!" ("Tears are not sufficient to express my pain, oh Edgar, my only love!).

In three other cases the first sung line is that of a solo aria or part of a "scena ed aria" (see Table 3.5). In each of these, the character singing the aria is alone onstage, and is therefore reflecting on his or her situation in traditional aria fashion. In the case of the early Le Villi, Guglielmo's first line ("No, possibil non è che invendicata resti la colpa sua!" "No, it isn't possible that his guilt should remain unavenged!") is part of a recitative—i.e., a scena—while his aria actually begins with the text "Anima santa della figlia mia" ("Holy spirit of my daughter"). The first lines for Angelica and Calaf, however, are from arias.
Monologue (reflective: aria or scena ed aria)

Villi/II  Guglielmo
"No, possibil non è che invindicata resti la colpa sua!"
("No, it isn't possible that his guilt should remain unavenged!")

Angelica/C  Angelica
"Senza mamma, o bimbo tu sei morto!"
(Without your mother, oh child you have died!"

Turandot/III  Calaf
"Nessun dorma! Nessun dorma...!"
("Let no one sleep! Let no one sleep...!")

Dialogue ensemble (set piece)

Manon/IV  Des Grieux to Manon
"Tutta su me ti posa, o mia stanca dilettata."
("Lean all your weight on me, my tired beloved.")

Fanciulla/III  Nick to Rance
"Ve lo giuro, sceriffo, darei tutte le mancie di dieci settimane pur di tornare indietro d'una sola, quando questo dannato Johnson della malora non ci s'era cacciato anch'or fra i piedi."
("I swear to you, Sheriff, I'd give all the tips of ten weeks if only to go back only one week, when this damned Johnson from hell hadn't yet crossed our path.")

Rondine/III  Magda to Ruggero
"Senti? Anche il mare respira sommesso. L'aria beve il profumo dei fior! So l'arte strana di comporre un filtro che possa rendere vana ogni tua stanchezza. Dimmi che ancora sempre ti piaccio!"
("You hear? Even the sea breathes softly. The air drinks the perfume of the flowers! I know the magic art of brewing a potion that can make your every weariness disappear. Tell me that I still always please you!")

Tabarro/B  Giorgetta to Luigi
"O Luigi! Bada a te! Può saltar fra momento! Resta pur là, lontano!"
("Oh Luigi! Be careful! He can come up any moment! Stay there, at a distance!")

continued on next page

Table 3.5: First onstage vocal utterance in the final acts of the multi-act operas and the final dramatic divisions of the one-act operas
Table 3.5 (continued)

**Dialogue (transient passage)**

**Bohème/IV** Marcello to Rodolfo
"In un coupé?"a
("In a coupe?")

**Tosca/III** Jailer to Cavaradossi, and to Sergeant
sacredote i vostri cenni attende."
("Mario Cavaradossi? [to sergeant] Here you are.... [to Cavaradossi] You have an
hour. A priest awaits your instructions.")

**Butterfly/III** Suzuki to Butterfly
"Già il sole... Cio Cio San"
("Already the sun... Cio Cio San")

**Schicchi/B** Schicchi to Relatives
"Nessuno sa che Buoso ha reso il fiato?"
("Does anyone know that Buoso has breathed his last?")

**Stage music**

**Edgar/III** chorus of boys
"In pace factus est locus ejus!"
("In peace he has taken rest!")

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aThe stage directions explain that Marcello is continuing the conversation that had begun
prior to the rise of the curtain.
In the remaining eight cases the principal character singing the introductory line addresses it to the only other character (or characters, in the case of Tosca) onstage.\textsuperscript{19} Four of these initial lines are the first lines of set pieces, and in each case the piece is a dialogue ensemble (see Table 3.5). Each of the other four cases involves a line of recitative sung during a transient passage.

The first line of Tosca/III, sung by the jailer, is unique in that it is directed at two different onstage characters and it begins while the cadential chord of the prelude is being held (for five measures). The jailer says "Mario Cavaradossi?" to the hero, who nods yes. The jailer then says "A voi" to the sergeant and hands him a pen. The sergeant signs the register and exits, followed by the police squad. As the they exit, the final chord of the prelude ends and is followed by a rest with a fermata, thus allowing the men to exit before the jailer delivers the next line, this time to Cavaradossi: "Vi resta un'ora. Un sacerdote i vostri cenni attende."

3. Tonality at the beginnings of final acts

While Puccini did not always begin operas on tonic triads, he virtually always began them solidly in unambiguous keys. (The only exception is Tosca.) Non-introductory acts, on the other hand, do not necessarily begin in a firmly established key, especially those composed after La Bohème. The following discussion will begin by clarifying the nature of the tonal ambiguity at the outset of the final acts of each of the five multi-act operas composed after La Bohème.

The third act of Tosca has a key signature of E major and begins monophonically. This melody emphasizes the super-tonic (F#), suggesting the Dorian mode. Yet when the melody eventually concludes, overlapping with the beginning of the next formal structure,

\textsuperscript{19}As stated above, the eight Donati relatives in Gianni Schicchi here function as one character, Butterfly's child functions as a prop, and the sleeping miners in La Fanciulla del West function as scenery.
it does so squarely on the tonic (E) and above a bass line that alternates between tonic and dominant. Therefore, after a tonally ambiguous introduction, Tosca/III begins in E major.

Although the first firmly established key of Butterfly/III is D major, it does not arrive until roughly nine minutes into the act, at almost the end of the lengthy orchestral prelude. The first tonality to actually assert itself in the prelude is E major, which arrives at bar nineteen. Even though the only tonic chords that appear in this passage are in second inversion (64), the arrival of this tonality also coincides with the appearance of the first key signature (four sharps) of the prelude. Prior to this point, Puccini has not used a key signature, choosing instead to notate all flat and sharp notes with accidentals. Certainly at this point in the score, the notational presentation of a written key signature, along with scales and chords which are derived from it, must be considered as an indication of tonality.

The final act of La Fanciulla del West is tonally ambiguous in still another way. In this case, the music for approximately the first ten minutes of the act is not in a traditional tonality, but hovers around various permutations of whole-tone scales, thus negating the true sense of a tonic note. The prominence of the D-major chord and its dominant-like areas in the cadences of some vocal phrases suggests D major as the key of the opening of this act.

Unlike Madama Butterfly and La Fanciulla del West, the beginning of Rondine/III is definitely in a traditional tonal idiom. The problem, however, is determining if the tonality is B♭ major or E♭ major. The first chord of the act could be a IV6 in B♭ major or a I6 in E♭ major. It can be argued either way, yet the key signature and the chordal progressions of the opening bars of the act (note the prominence of the V7 chord at the ends of the first two seven-bar phrases, which prepare the tonic bass note on the downbeat of
the subsequent phrases) point to B♭ major as the initial key center. The entire B♭ major section does, nevertheless, function as the dominant for the forthcoming E♭ major conclusion of the opening set piece.

In his ever growing interest in exploring the expanded tonal systems of the early twentieth century, Puccini again blurs the boundaries of traditional tonality in the opening moments of Turandot/III.20 This time, he investigates the realm of bitonality by predominantly merging D minor and C♯ major. Furthermore, he also alternates passages in bitonality with modal passages (G Dorian). As he did with the opening of Butterfly/III, the composer eliminates any preconceived ideas of tonality by avoiding the use of a key signature and instead notating all the flat and sharp notes with accidentals. The first key signature (G major) does not arrive until the beginning of Calaf's aria, "Nessun dorma."

Despite all this, one hears D minor as the tonal center of the opening of the act; this is because the bass line prior to the first written key signature consistently centers around D and its dominant, regardless of what harmonic activity is happening above it. This tonal center then descends a fifth for the ensuing G-major aria.

Having established the keys at the beginnings of the final acts (however tentatively), we might consider the relationship between the initial tonalities of the final acts and the concluding tonalities of the penultimate acts. At issue is what has taken place

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20 Several scholars have noted the growth of Puccini's harmonic language throughout his career, from secondary sevenths and ninths of pre-Wagnerian romantic harmony (Le Villi and Edgar) to Tristan harmonies in Manon Lescaut, to parallel fifths (before Debussy) in La Bohème, to overt Impressionistic harmonies and modal and whole-tone scales (Tosca, Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West), to Petrushka-like harmonic combinations (Il Tabarro), to bitonality, chords of the fourth, and naked, harsh dissonances in Turandot. Carner speculates that had Puccini "lived longer it is certain that he would have availed himself of dodecaphony and quarter-tones" (Puccini, 322). Throughout his career, Puccini continually studied contemporary scores to keep abreast on the latest trends in harmony and orchestration, as well as popular music (e.g., ragtime, waltz, tango, etc.), which he would then incorporate into his scores. (Note the use of ragtime rhythms in La Fanciulla del West, the Johann Strauss-Franz Lehár waltz-types in La Ronde, and the tango rhythms in Il Tabarro.) One of my favorite places in all of Puccini's operas occurs in Act I of La Ronde, where he pays tribute to Richard Strauss. The poet Pruner lists several of his favorite female characters in a monotone recitative: Galatea, Berenice, Francesca, and finally Salome, at which time he sings the minor-third "Salome" motive from Strauss' opera.
dramatically from the end of the penultimate act to the beginning of the final act. In most cases a period from a few months to roughly a year has passed between acts. In the case of *La Fanciulla del West*, however, the time between Acts II and III is one week, and in the cases of *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot* only a few hours have passed between Acts II and III. Also, only two operas have final acts that are set in the same location as the preceding act: *Le Villi* (roughly six months later) and *Madama Butterfly* (only a few hours later). Finally, all of the multi-act operas have some type of implied action that takes place during the final entr'acte. Apart from the striking—though perhaps coincidental—sets of symmetrical pairs involving the tonal centers D, E, F♯, and B♭ (see boxes in Table 3.6), no particular pattern seems to emerge. (Of course, these key choices must necessarily reflect larger issues of tonality for at least these pairs of acts if not entire operas. On this subject see note 57 in Chapter 5 below.) Two of the one-act operas, *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*, involve no passage of time before the final dramatic division (Angelica/C and Schicchi/B, as defined in Chapter 1 above); there is no change of key in either case. In *Il Tabarro* a few minutes elapse between divisions (though the principals never leave the stage), and there is a key change: as the first part begins to draw to a close, all of the characters exit except Luigi and Giorgetta; a pair of offstage voices sing the textless strains of the "River Seine" motive;21 and the music comes to a complete stop with a V⁹-I cadence in A♭ major, followed by an empty ("vuota") measure; then the second half of *Il Tabarro* begins in C♯ minor—i.e., an enharmonic substitute for D♭ minor.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acts</th>
<th>Closing tonality</th>
<th>Opening tonality</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penultimate act ends and final act begins…</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...in the same tonality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td></td>
<td>...a descending P5 apart</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>V ili/I-II</td>
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<td>...an ascending P5 apart</td>
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<td>...a descending d5 apart</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bohème/III-IV</td>
<td>Gb</td>
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<td>Butterfly/II-III</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>...an ascending d5 apart</td>
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<td>Rondine/II-III</td>
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<td>...a descending M3 apart</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Edgar/II-III</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td>...an ascending M3 apart</td>
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<td>Turandot/II-III</td>
<td>Bb</td>
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<td>...a descending or an ascending m3 apart</td>
<td>Bb</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...a descending M2 apart</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tosca/II-III</td>
<td>f#</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>Fanciulla/II-III</td>
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<td>...an ascending m2 apart</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6: Intervallic relationships between the opening tonality of the final acts and the closing tonality of the penultimate acts
Finally, a brief comment on mode at the beginning of finales. Six of the nine multi-act operas have final acts beginning in major, and three in minor. Five of the six final acts employing a major tonality at their outset are those operas in the middle of Puccini’s output: La Bohème, Tosca, Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West, and La Rondine. Three of these acts begin prior to or around the hour of dawn, and each opens with an apprehensive mood of waiting. The other two take place during the afternoon, and each depicts various aspects of domestic life.

A sixth concluding act beginning in major mode, Villi/II, begins with a prelude ("1°. Tempo: L'Abbandono"), during which, from behind a scrim, the funeral procession for Anna can be seen leaving Guglielmo’s house. Here the score does not indicate the time of day as it does in the other five cases, but one can assume that the funeral procession took place during daylight hours. Indeed, as the next piece begins (with the rise of the scrim), the score indicates that the temporal setting is nighttime. This subsequent piece ("2°. Tempo: La Tregenda") is in the minor mode, which, as will be seen immediately below, Puccini apparently associates with evening settings.

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22 Puccini preferred to begin his operas in major mode. There are only two exceptions: the busy C-minor fugue at the beginning of Madama Butterfly (during which the marriage broker, Goro, shows Pinkerton his new house), and the repressive D-minor opening of Turandot, in which it is stated that yet another suitor will be beheaded. Regarding mode at the ends of the operas, see Chapter 4 below.

23 Tosca/III, Cavaradossi is unsettlingly resolute while awaiting his execution; Butterfly/III, Butterfly anxiously anticipates Pinkerton’s return; and Fanciulla/III, Rance and Nick show signs of agitation as they await the capture of Johnson.

24 At the beginning of Bohème/IV, Rodolfo and Marcello are again shown in their Act I garret apartment attempting to do the same tasks they were trying to accomplish at the beginning of the opera. The only difference is that in Act I they were trying to work in spite of the cold temperature, and in Act IV they are trying to work in spite of their cold hearts from the loss of their lovers. As for Rondine/III, the act opens with the apparent domestic bliss of two lovers spending a warm spring afternoon at a summer cottage.

25 While one might expect a funeral procession to be set in minor mode, the text, centering around “rest in peace” ("Requiesce in pace"), is wholly in keeping with a luminous, though none too cheerful, major tonality.
In the three multi-act operas whose final acts begin in minor (*Edgar*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *Turandot*), the settings occur at night or nearing sunset, and in each case, the mood is one of apparent despair.26

The operas in *Il Trittico* all begin in a major tonality, and in each case the final dramatic division begins in a different key and in minor mode, perhaps to underscore a nervous sense of foreboding and contrivance. In *Il Tabarro* Giorgetta and Luigi begin to plot their ill-fated rendezvous (57). Gianni Schicchi begins his devilish manipulation of the Donati relatives at 44. And Angelica, who is emotionally crushed by the knowledge of her child's death, slowly starts to formulate the rationale for taking her own life (60).

4. Summary

There are several distinct patterns that represent Puccini's method of setting the opening of the final acts of the multi-act operas and the final dramatic divisions of the one-act operas. First, most of the acts begin with some type of aural, rather than visual, impression; that is, they begin with music heard prior to the raising of the curtain. This is always an orchestral prelude, which may or may not be accompanied by offstage voices, and may or may not be an autonomous piece. Whether or not the curtain is up, every final act without exception begins with some type of orchestral prelude, and no matter what its length, it accompanies some type of staged pantomime. Furthermore, almost all of the terminal acts of the multi-act operas and the final major dramatic divisions of the one-act operas begin with only one or two principal characters on stage; when there is one, he or

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26With *Edgar*, the "apparent" designation is most fitting, as the plot centers around a mock funeral. The hopeless situation of Manon and Des Grieux at the beginning of *Manon* IV depicts despair at its utmost. Despair at the outset of *Turandot* III is reflected in the frustration of the residents of Peking over not being able to identify the "unknown" prince.
she sings a traditional reflective scena ed aria, and when there are two, they engage in direct
dialogue, possibly as the beginning of a set piece and possibly as a bit of transient
recitative.

Most of the terminal acts begin with a tonally closed piece, most often orchestral,
that is followed by silence; sometimes, but by no means always, the ensuing component
has the same tonal center. In several cases, however, a brief tonally open prelude leads
directly into a vocal component that also avoids closure at its end; in these cases Puccini
postpones any sense of arrival until at least the next component of the act.

In most cases a period from a few months to roughly a year has passed between the
penultimate and final acts of each of the nine multi-act operas, and in each case the tonality
is displaced between the end of the former and the beginning of the later in order to indicate
the passage of time. Of the three one-act operas, two involve no passage time between
their penultimate and final major dramatic divisions, and there is no change of key in either
case. The third, in which a few minutes elapse between the two dramatic divisions,
changes key. Six of the final acts of the nine multi-act operas begin in major; mode here
seems to be associated with time of day, major with daytime and minor with evening.
Lastly, the finales of the five multi-act operas composed after La Bohème all begin with
some degree of tonal ambiguity.
CHAPTER 4

ENDINGS OF FINAL ACTS

Often the most effective and memorable dramatic moments in a Puccini opera occur in the concluding few minutes of the score. This chapter will focus on the interplay between the dramatic and musical structures at the ends of the operas. For the most part the investigation of each opera will begin with the concluding set piece and proceed to the opera's conclusion; however, in those cases where the opera does not end with a set piece, the examination will begin with the dramatic climax and progress to the end of the work. This presentation will concentrate on three basic topics: the final curtains, the final visual impressions, and the final aural impressions.

1. Final curtains

In his article on Puccini in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Mosco Carner points out that the composer "was obsessed with the precise moment at which the curtain should be raised or dropped,"\(^1\) then quotes Puccini as saying, "A curtain dropped too soon or too late often means the failure of an opera."\(^2\) This concern for the

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\(^2\) Ibid., taken from chapter one, "Il decalogo di Puccini," of Luigi Ricci's Puccini Interprete di se Stesso (Milano: Ricordi, 1954), 14. For a translation of the entire chapter, see: Luigi Ricci, "Ten Commandments of Puccini," trans. Paul J. Zappa, Opera News, XLII (December 17, 1977), 18-19. In context, the quote is as follows: "VIII. The Curtain as Music. The decisive importance of the raising and,
particular moment of curtain closure can be seen clearly in Puccini's scores, for, in most cases, he has given specific directions for the lowering of the final curtain. Furthermore, in the cases where there is no indication in the score, the musical setting clearly implies the point of closure. This discussion will begin by attempting to identify the moment when the final curtain descends in those four operas for which the scores give no explicit instructions. It will be assumed that these four operas follow the pattern set by the other seven: in every Puccini opera the final impression with which the audience is left is an aural one; in other words, the curtain is to be completely closed before the music has stopped.

A perfect example of music dictating curtain closure occurs at the end of *Le Villi*, where Puccini has provided a momentary silence for the curtain to fall. Seven bars from

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5 Of the 27 completed acts in all of Puccini's multi-act operas (which excludes only Act III of *Turandot*), 21 have specific directions for the lowering of the curtain, while only nine do not. In all but one case, these nine acts are from early in Puccini's career. Closing curtains are not designated in either act of *Le Villi*, Acts I and II of *Edgar*, and the first act of *Manon Lescaut*. From this, it is apparent that as Puccini's acute sense of dramatic theatre matured, so did his desire for a precise closing curtain. This presumption raises a question concerning the third act of *Edgar*, which does have a designation for the closing curtain. Despite the absence of supporting evidence, I hypothesize that in its original four-act version (1890) the final act of *Edgar* also had no designation for its closing curtain, and that Puccini added the curtain direction to the last act when he reduced the opera to three acts (1892). By this time in his career the composer had already completed most of *Manon Lescaut*, which has exact curtain designations in all but its first act, and he was beginning to place more and more scenic directions in his scores. In addition, the major dramatic revision of the score entailed merely cutting the fourth act and attaching its ending to the original third act. Perhaps Puccini, with his growing theatrical awareness, felt the need to help the stage director as much as possible with a very awkward dramatic finish.

The only other act from a multi-act opera without notated directions by Puccini for the final curtain is Act II of *La Bohème*, which, interestingly enough, also lacks directions for the opening of the curtain. This is a fact that Greenwald ignores in her otherwise fine analysis of Acts I and II of this opera, in which she contends that the two acts should be considered as one.

4 Since Puccini himself did not complete the score for *Turandot* (in which the final curtain is not indicated in the score), this opera will omitted from this discussion.

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the end of the score, the orchestra abruptly stops on the downbeat. That bar is then
followed by an empty ("vuota") measure in which, presumably, the curtain quickly
descends before the orchestra slowly pounds three final unison strokes.

It is rather interesting that all three operas in Il Trittico begin with very explicit
instructions concerning the raising of the curtain, but none includes the slightest verbal hint
regarding its closure. Nevertheless, in all three cases there are strongly convincing musical
and dramatic signposts for the curtain’s descent.

In the case of Il Tabarro, in order to allow time for the shocking stage action to take
place and to have its harsh impact on the audience, the closing of the curtain must be
delayed until the penultimate measure. Puccini has placed a fermata over the second beat of
that bar, which contains the final orchestral chord of the piece. This allows the curtain to
close rapidly before the chord ends on the downbeat of the last bar.

With Suor Angelica, too, the stage action requires that the descent be delayed as
long as possible, but in this case the curtain should presumably descend slowly in order not
to disrupt the euphoric mood created by the resplendent miracle. The offstage angelic
voices sing the final vocal phrases of the opera and their last note ceases on the downbeat
of the penultimate measure, at which point an already fading orchestral chord resolves to
the tonic and continues its diminuendo to pppp at the final bar. The most logical place to
begin the curtain’s unhurried descent is on the downbeat of that penultimate measure.

The descent of the final curtain in Gianni Schicchi is not quite as easily located as it
is in the other two one-act operas. Ten measures from the end of the score the music stops,
and Schicchi, without orchestral accompaniment, delivers his concluding spoken lines
directly to the audience. He makes the motion of applause and then bows. As he bows,
the orchestra plays one complete statement of the two-bar "Dexterity" motive,\textsuperscript{5} in an allegro
deciso tempo (upbeat to bars seven and eight from the end). Following that, beginning six

bars from the end, the orchestra repeats the final structural cell of the motive twice and quickly accelerates (stringendo) to the end of the score. In order for a normal fast curtain to reach the floor before the final note, it would probably have to begin its descent no later than this point.

However, according to Luigi Ricci (1893-1981), this is not the location of the curtain. From the mid-1910s until Puccini’s death, Ricci not only prepared the productions of the composer’s operas at Rome’s Teatro Costanzi, but did so with the composer himself as collaborator. These productions included the Italian premiere of Il Trittico, which took place on January 11, 1919. In his book, Puccini: Interprete di se stesso, Ricci recounts in great detail his collaboration with the composer, and he specifically notes the location at which the curtain to Gianni Schicchi is to descend. “The curtain, very quickly [rapidissimo], has to be closed exactly at the penultimate bar of page 180 [of the piano-vocal score].” Thus, the final curtain of Il Trittico must literally fall.

A fifth opera requires brief comment. The orchestral score of La Rondine does not include instructions for the curtain to close; fortunately, however, the piano-vocal score does, and this marker is at a musically and dramatically logical site. It will be recalled that the piano-vocal score of La Rondine is one prepared by Puccini’s longtime associate, Carlo Carignani, who always worked closely with the composer in order to document the composer’s wishes in the piano-vocal scores. Although the Carignani piano-vocal score locates the point at which the curtain is to fall, it does not describe its speed of descent. The speed is suggested by the mood of the music, which certainly calls for an unhurried pace.

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6 Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West, and Il Trittico. Ricci also prepared the Roman premiere of Turandot, which took place on April 29, 1926, four days after the world premiere at La Scala.

7 "Il sipario, rapidissimo, deve essere chiuso esattamente alla penultima battuta di pag. 180." Luigi Ricci, Puccini: Interprete di se stesso (Milano: Ricordi, 1954), 197. It is interesting that Ricci uses the word “battuta” to indicate a bar of music, for it can also mean “joke.”
Assuming that these inferences regarding non-notated final curtains are correct, one can establish several general characteristics of the final curtains of the eleven completed operas (see Table 4.1). First of all, the number of measures from the point where the curtain begins its descent to the end of the opera ranges between two and seven. These numbers, of course, do not take tempo or meter into account. One must therefore consider clock time as well, with the understanding that musical timings can vary from performance to performance and are thus approximate. According to approximate timings, final curtains begin their descent from two to forty seconds prior to the end of the music. The final *La Bohème* curtain occurs by far the earliest, while the *Gianni Schicchi* curtain descends closest to the end of the score. Three of the operas have final curtains that occur particularly early, each descending roughly twenty seconds or more before the end of the music: *La Bohème, La Fanciulla del West*, and *Suor Angelica*. If these three are omitted, the average time from curtain to the end of the opera is around nine or ten seconds, just long enough to leave the audience with a brief aural impression of the conclusion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>No. of mm. from end</th>
<th>Approximate time remaining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Le Villi</em></td>
<td>59+52* [quick descent]</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>00:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>54+15 &quot;calo rapidamente la tela&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>00:08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>25+13 &quot;calo rapidamente la tela&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>00:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Bohème</em></td>
<td>31+7 &quot;calo lentamente il sipario&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>00:41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>41+6, beat 3 &quot;sipario rapido&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>00:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>58+9 &quot;sipario rapido&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>00:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Fanciulla del West</em></td>
<td>upbeat to 44+18 &quot;calo lentamente il sipario&quot;†</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>00:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td>52+7* [slow descent]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>100+8* [quick descent]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td>84+9* [slow descent]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>86+4* [quick descent]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00:02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*not indicated in either orchestral or piano-vocal score.
†not indicated in orchestral score, but appears in piano/vocal score.
‡as characters continue to sing text.

Table 4.1: Location of final curtain
Puccini shows a marked preference to end the operas with a quickly descending curtain. There is great variety in the seven operas that utilize this effect, but in five of the cases it aptly accompanies shocking endings set in minor tonalities. In _Le Villi_, after Anna has danced Roberto to death, all the Villi and Spiriti abruptly follow her off stage, leaving Roberto's corpse lying in full view of the audience, alone on the stage (G minor). In _Edgar_, Tigrana suddenly stabs Fidelia, leaving the townspeople horrified (B minor). Tosca suddenly hurls herself over the parapet to the surprise of all on stage (E♭ minor). Butterfly drags herself from behind the screen and dies just as Pinkerton enters (B minor). And in _Il Tabarro_, Michele forces Giorgetta to kiss the body of her dead lover (C minor).

Only in one case, that of the comedic _Gianni Schicchi_, does a rapidly descending curtain accompany an ending that is not tragic but good humored, albeit rather devious as well. Not surprisingly, _Gianni Schicchi_ ends with a major tonality (G♭ major).

It can, however, be argued that the only remaining opera with a quickly descending final curtain, _Manon Lescaut_, would be better served dramatically and musically with a slow curtain. The ending is certainly not a shocking one as Manon's impending death is unquestionably apparent at the beginning of the final act. Furthermore, her death is not at all violent, but rather sentimental in a way that recalls the death of Mimi in _La Bohème_. And lastly, the final chord of this opera is dynamically soft (pp), unlike that of every other opera in this category, all of which conclude _fortissimo_ or louder.

The four operas that conclude with a slowly descending curtain all have sentimental endings and conclude with soft dynamics ranging from _pianissimo_ to _pppp_. Furthermore, three conclude in major tonalities. The single case of minor tonality in this category is _La Bohème_, and as mentioned above, its final curtain occurs earlier in the score than that of any other opera. It is as if Puccini is trying to prevent the audience from leaving the pitiable scene of the devastated Bohemians, forcing the spectators to experience the grief onstage until the music finally fades away.
Puccini carries this concept still further in *La Fanciulla del West*. Not only does the curtain descend slowly, but its descent begins while the principal characters and chorus are still singing, and the characters continue to sing, although briefly, even after the curtain is completely closed. Approximately thirty seconds before the end of the opera, just as Minnie and Johnson exit, the curtain begins to close, and the two lovers can still be faintly heard bidding California *addio* on the final note of the score. This is the only instance of Puccini ending an opera, or even an act, in this manner; and not surprisingly, audiences for this opera are invariably perplexed as to when to begin the applause.

Puccini uses this same technique more modestly at the end of *La Rondine*. The final sung note is performed offstage, but it ceases before the curtain closes. In this case the audience's final impression of the opera is not focused on Magda (the offstage singer), who, like the swallow, has returned to her former life, but on Ruggero and his heartbroken sobs that continue through the final moments of the score.

The fourth opera to end with a slowly descending curtain is *Suor Angelica*, perhaps the most sentimental of all Puccini's operas. Once again the composer attempts to keep the audience under the spell of the scene until the very last moment of musical sound. As her child steps towards her, Angelica dies, and her soul is saved by the Virgin Mary as heavenly voices are heard from offstage and the stage is flooded with light. As the miracle resounds ("il miracolo sfolgora") the curtain gradually closes, reaching the floor just as the final bright C-major chord fades away (*pppp*).

2. Final visual impressions

As mentioned above, the final impression with which the audience is left in all of Puccini's operas is aural. Yet opera is a visual medium as well as an aural one, and it is
often the final visual impression that has the greatest impact on the audience. This
discussion will begin by focusing on the characters on stage and whether they are dead or
alive. It will then consider visual stage action.

In all of the operas taken together, including *Turandot*, there are sixteen deaths that
are either witnessed by the audience or reported in the presence of the audience, and in
every case the character who dies is at some point seen on stage. Of course, some of these
deaths take place at points in the drama that are not near the finale.\(^8\) In view of all of these
deaths, it is not surprising that only two of Puccini's operas involve no deaths of any
characters: *La Fanciulla del West* and *La Rondine*. Yet even one of these contains a
character whose current plight has been provoked by a family death: Johnson tells Minnie
(in Act II) that it is because of the death of his father that he has become an outlaw.

Despite all of these dead characters, four of Puccini's operas conclude without a
death near the closing moments of the score, and therefore have no deceased characters on
stage at their ends (see Table 4.2). Each of the other eight operas, however, concludes
with the death of at least one main character, and all but one of the corpses is in full view of
the audience as the curtain descends. The only exception is Tosca, who kills herself by
leaping off the parapet of the Castel Sant'Angelo (to a position out of view for the
audience) just moments before the end of the opera, and even in this case, the audience still
has full view of the bullet-ridden body of Cavaradossi.

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\(^8\) Angelica's child has died several years prior to the beginning of the opera. Buoso Donati has just died as
the curtain rises in *Gianni Schicchi*, the Prince of Persia is executed during Act I of *Turandot*, Anna dies
between Acts I and II of *Le Villi*, the death of Angelotti is reported and Scarpia is stabbed in Act II of
*Tosca*, and Liù kills herself midway through Act III of *Turandot*. 
**Operas with none**

*La Fanciulla del West*

*La Rondine*

*Gianni Schicchi* (Donati's body is carried off stage midway in the action.)

*Turandot* (Liu's body is carried off stage shortly after her death.)

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**Operas with a deceased male character on stage**

*Le Villi*  
*Il Tabarro*  
*Tosca*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roberto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luigi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cavaradossi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operas with a deceased female character on stage**

*Edgar*  
*Manon Lescaut*  
*La Bohème*  
*(Tosca)*  
*Madama Butterfly*  
*Suor Angelica*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fidelia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mimi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tosca)</td>
<td>(Tosca offstage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly</td>
<td>Butterfly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica</td>
<td>Angelica</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 4.2: Onstage deceased personages at the conclusion of the opera

Excluding the character Tosca, whose corpse is offstage, the expired bodies of three men and five women are in full view of the audience as the final curtains descend on the operas (see Table 4.2). Each man is killed, and each by a different method, always at the hand of someone else: the ghost of Anna dances Roberto to death, Cavaradossi is shot by a firing squad, and Luigi is strangled to death by Michele. After the characters' demise, Puccini and his librettists derive dramatic effect from the three corpses in different ways. Perhaps the most unexpected action occurs after Roberto has died: Anna and the Villi rejoice in their completed mission and promptly exit, leaving Roberto's corpse alone on
stage as the curtain descends.\textsuperscript{9} The shock of Tosca's discovery that Cavaradossi has indeed been executed is quickly outweighed by her even more shocking leap to her death, and the dramatic focus shifts completely away from the corpse. Without a doubt, the most shocking treatment of a corpse comes at the end of \textit{Il Tabarro}, when Luigi's body becomes a stage prop that Michele hides under his cloak. As Giorgetta draws near to him, Michele opens his cloak and shoves the body at the feet of Giorgetta and then forces her to kiss it.

The bodies of the five female characters, excluding Tosca, who have died on stage and remain there at the end of the score have likewise met their deaths in various ways. Two commit suicide, two die from natural causes, and one is murdered. Of all the deaths of females (eight) that occur in Puccini's operas, only one is the result of a murder, and it is at the hands of another female. At almost the very end of \textit{Edgar}, Tigrana, prowling like a cat ("con moto felini"), suddenly stabs Fidelia, who, without uttering a sound, immediately dies.\textsuperscript{10} The crowd is shocked and the curtain falls. The other female deaths are much more dramatically drawn out than that of Fidelia. Of these, only one, Butterfly's suicide, is the least bit jarring in its theatrical effect, ultimately leaving the audience aghast.\textsuperscript{11} Still, although Butterfly has specific stage directions after the point where she mortally wounds herself (see below), she does not vocalize a single word after that action. The remaining three heroines die much more gradually. From the moment Manon and Mimi make their Act IV entrances, it is evident that their deaths are imminent; yet each goes on to sing

\textsuperscript{9}The libretto for \textit{Le Villi} includes a final line for Guglielmo: "(uscendo e vedendo il cadavere di Roberto) 'È giusto Iddio!..." *(coming out [of the house] and seeing Roberto's body) "God is just!..."* However, Puccini has not included it in the score.

\textsuperscript{10}Fidelia is the only Puccini heroine who dies without singing a single note just prior to her death.

\textsuperscript{11}It is interesting that Puccini and his librettists stopped short of imparting absolute, unmitigated shock value to this scene by having the young mother blindfold her child and then go behind a screen before stabbing herself.
several ensembles and even an aria, or aria-like passage, before she dies. Similarly, Angelica drinks the poison, realizes her terrible mistake, begs for forgiveness, and then, several minutes later, finally expires in a state of exhilaration.

As might be expected, the living characters on stage at the conclusions of Puccini’s operas vary considerably in number and type (see Table 4.3).
None

Le Villi

Only principles and/or named characters, no chorus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>Des Grieux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>Rodolfo, Marcello, Musetta, Colline, Schaunard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>Pinkerton, Sharpless, Dolore(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>Ruggero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>Giorgetta, Michele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>The Virgin Mary, Angelica's child(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td>Schicchi, Lauretta, Rinuccio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals and chorus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>Edgar, Frank, Gualtiero, Tigrana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus: soldiers, monks, townspeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>Sciarrone, Spoletta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus &amp; supernumeraries: soldiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>Nick, Trin, Harry, Joe, Sonora, Bello, Happy, Billy, Rance(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus: miners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandor(^c)</td>
<td>Turandot, Calaf, Altoum, Ping, Pong, Pang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus &amp; supernumeraries: large crowd, court, dignitaries, wise men, soldiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brass: 6 trumpets, 3 trombones, bass trombone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Butterfly's child

\(^b\)Actually spirits or apparitions

\(^c\)Schicchi alone in the room, addressing the audience; Lauretta and Rinuccio on the terrace, visible and audible through a large open window

\(^d\)The last reference to Rance in the score is a stage direction more than 130 measures, roughly eight minutes, before the end of the opera: "Rance, pale and grim, moves away and sits down on a tree trunk near the fire" ("Rance pallido e torvo, si discosta e si siede sul tronco d'albero presso al fuoco"). As there is no reference to his exit, he is presumably present at the close of the curtain.

\(^e\)Based on the Alfano ending

Table 4.3: Living personages onstage at the conclusion of the opera

96
These stage populations range from no surviving characters (in *Le Villi* all of the "living" characters quickly exit, leaving only a corpse on stage) to two or more living principals, a chorus, possibly non-singing supernumeraries, and in one case (*Turandot*) an onstage brass ensemble. As the table shows, seven operas end with only principals and/or named characters on stage. Both *Manon Lescaut* and *La Rondine* conclude with a single living character on stage, and in both cases it is the hero, a tenor. Only in *Suor Angelica* are there personages who make their first appearance in the opera during the final scene: the Virgin Mary and Angelica's child. Both are mute roles. (Even the onstage brass ensemble of *Turandot* makes an earlier appearance, in Act II.)

Puccini and his librettists gave very detailed instructions for the closing stage action for each opera. These final stage directions, taken from the scores, are transcribed here, excluding *Turandot*. The Italian directions are given first, followed by an English translation or paraphrase. Each of the following passages, which I have chosen to begin with the final major dramatic event of the opera, includes all of the published stage actions, along with the characters' dialogue to help clarify the action:

*Le Villi* — beginning 56+14

Roberto accorrendo ansimante, coi capelli irti, va a bussare alla casa di Guglielmo; poi, scorgendo le Villi, che lo inseguono venendo dalla destra, fa per fuggire dalla parte opposta; ma Anna appare alla sinistra. Ella lo riafferra e lo travolge nuovamente in una ridda, fra le Villi che sopraggiungono. [Roberto] sfinito, cadendole ai piedi: "Anna, Pietà!"...muore... [Anna] disapparendo: "Sei mio!"... [Villi e Spiriti] seguendo Anna: "Osanna!"

Roberto, rushing breathlessly with his hair bristling, goes to knock at Guglielmo's house; then, sensing the Villi wildly pursuing him from the right, he tries to escape in the opposite direction; but Anna appears at the left. She grabs him and drags him once again into a wild dance, while the

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13In four cases this includes the entire final scene, as defined by the entrance and/or exit of one or more characters; however, in most cases it does not.
Villi gather around them. Roberto, exhausted, falls at Anna's feet: "Anna, have mercy!" He dies. Anna, disappearing: "You're mine!" The Villi and Spiriti follow her: "Hosanna!"

**Edgar** — beginning 54+3

Edgar s'avvia avvinto a Fidelia, mentre la folla si ritrae... Tigrana, con moti felini, quasi strisciando si avvicina inosservata e violentemente colpisce con un pugnale Fidelia, che cade fulminata... Edgar e Frank si slanciano su Tigrana, la quale cerca sfuggire perdendosi tra la folla, ma essa è afferrata da alcuni soldati, mentre tutti, inorriditi, gridano: "Orrore! Orrore!" Frank: "A morte!" Coro: "A morte! A morte! Orrore!" Edgar si abbandona sul corpo di Fidelia, singhiozzando; Frank abbraccia e sorregge Guaitiero... Alcuni soldati trascinano via Tigrana, mentre alcune giovanette fanno cerchio pietoso intorno al corpo di Fidelia, ed i Frati ed il popolo si inginocchiano pregando.

Edgar starts to leave with Fidelia, while the crowd makes way for them. Tigrana, moving like a cat, approaches them unobserved and violently stabs Fidelia with a sword. She falls in a flash. Edgar and Frank throw themselves at Tigrana, who disappears into the crowd, only to be caught by some soldiers, while everyone, horrified, screams: "Horror! Horror!" Frank: "Kill her!" Chorus: "Kill her! Kill her! Horror!" Edgar, losing control of himself, sobs over Fidelia's corpse, as Frank embraces and supports Guaitiero. Some of the soldiers drag Tigrana away, while some young women form a grieving circle around Fidelia's body, and the monks and people kneel in prayer.

**Manon Lescaut** — beginning 25+8

[Manon] muore... Des Grieux, pazzo di dolore, scoppia in un pianto convulso poi cade svenuto sul corpo di Manon.

Manon dies. Des Grieux, insane with grief, convulses into tears, then falls unconscious on Manon's body.

**La Bohème** — beginning upbeat to 30+10

Colline (senza voce): "Come va?" Rodolfo (senza voce): "Vedi? È tranquilla." Volgendosi, vede Musetta che gli fa cenno essere pronta la medicina: scende dalla sedia, ma nell'accorrere presso Musetta si accorge dello strano contegno di Marcello e Schaunard. Con voce strozzata dallo sgomento: "Che vuol dire quell'andare e venire... quel guardarci così?...." [Marcello] non regge più, corre a Rodolfo ed abbracciandolo gli grida: "Coraggio!..." [Rodolfo] si precipita al letto di Mimì, la solleva e scuotendola grida colla massima disperazione: "Mimi!... Mimi!..." Si getta sul corpo esanime di Mimì... Musetta spaventata corre al letto, getta un grido angoscioso, buttandosi ginocchioni e piangente ai piedi di Mimì dalla parte opposta di Rodolfo... Schaunard si abbandona accasciato su di una sedia, a sinistra della scena... Colline va ai piedi del letto, rimanendo atterrito per la rapidità della catastrofe... Marcello singhiozzerza, volgendo le spalle al proscenio...

Colline (spoken): "How is she?" Rodolfo (spoken): "See? She's calm." Rodolfo turns and begins to sit in a chair, but when he sees Musetta gesture that the medicine is ready, he rushes towards her. He notices the demeanor of Marcello and Schaunard. With a choking voice of dismay:
"What does it mean, that going and coming, that looking at me like that?!..." Marcello, no longer able to bear it, rushes to Rodolfo and embraces him, sobbing: "Courage!..." Rodolfo flings himself onto Mimi's bed, lifts her and shakes her with a great cry of desperation: "Mimi!... Mimi!..." He falls on Mimi's lifeless body. Musetta, frightened, runs to the bed and screams in anguish, falls to her knees and cries at the feet of Mimi, opposite Rodolfo. Schaunard, overcome, sinks back into a chair on the left of the stage. Colline goes to the foot of the bed, dazed in fright at the quickness of the catastrophe. Marcello, sobbing, turns his back to the proscenium.

**Tosca** — beginning upbeat to 37


Tosca, turning Cavaradossi's body over: "Mario! Mario!" with cry of desperation "Ah! He's dead... He's dead!... He's dead!" sighs and sobs, "Oh Mario... dead? You?... Like this?" She throws herself onto the body of Cavaradossi: "To end like this?... To end like this?" Spoletta, Sciarrone, and some soldiers can be heard from below as they cry from a distance. Tosca: "You, dead!" Sciarrone: "I'm telling you, stabbed!" Tosca, weeping: "Mario... your poor Floria! Mario! Mario!" Spoletta and soldiers yelling: "Scarpia?" Sciarrone: "Scarpia." Spoletta and soldiers: "Ah!" Spoletta: "The woman is Tosca!" Sciarrone and soldiers: "Don't let her escape!" Tosca, losing control of herself, desperately weeping, falls onto Cavaradossi's body. Spoletta and Sciarrone, drawing closer: "Watch the foot of the stairs!" All, very close: "Watch the foot of the stairs!" A great tumult is heard from below. Spoletta and Sciarrone appear on the staircase. Pointing at Tosca, Spoletta cries: "It's she!" Spoletta: "Ah! Tosca you will pay very dearly for his life!" Tosca: "With mine!" Spoletta throws himself on Tosca, but she jumps to her feet to defend herself so violently that Spoletta falls backward into the stair well. Then she runs to the parapet and, jumping onto it, cries out: "O Scarpia, before God!" She
throws herself into space. Sciarrone and some soldiers, increasingly confused, rush to the parapet and look down. Spoletta remains dumbfounded and startled.

**Madama Butterfly — beginning 56+5**

Si ode cadere a terra il coltello, e il gran velo bianco scompare dietro al paravento. Si vede Butterfly sporgersi fuori dal paravento, e brancolando muovere verso il bambino... il granvelo bianco le circonda il collo: con un debole sorriso saluta colla mano il bambino e si trascina presso di lui, avendo ancora forza di abbracciarlo, poi gli cade vicino.... Pinkerton, interno: "Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!" La porta di destra è violentemente aperta. Pinkerton e Sharpless si precipitano nella stanza, accorrendo presso Butterfly che con debole gesto indica il bambino e muore. Pinkerton si inginocchia, mentre Sharpless prende il bimbo e lo bacia singhiozzando.

The dagger is heard falling on the ground, and the large white veil disappears behind the screen. Butterfly is seen emerging from behind the screen; tottering, she gropes her way towards the child. The large white veil is around her neck; smiling feebly, she greets the child with her hand and drags herself up to him. She has just enough strength left to embrace him, then falls to the ground beside him. Pinkerton is heard from offstage: "Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!" The door on the right opens violently. Pinkerton and Sharpless rush into the room and up to Butterfly, who with a feeble gesture points to the child and dies. Pinkerton falls on his knees, while Sharpless takes the child and kisses him, sobbing.

**La Fanciulla del West — beginning upbeat to 44+6**


Minnie abbraccia Sonora. Sonora, crying: "Go, Minnie, good-bye!" Miners, with subdued, upset, voices: "Never again will you return, no, never again, never again!" Minnie shakes hands with some of the miners; sees Nick, who has come on the stage and has been watching the action for some time; she wants to shake his hand, but Nick falls down at her feet
sobbing; she bends over him and kisses his head, then goes up to Johnson and takes his arm. Minnie and Johnson, sweetly, with sentiment of the general sorrowful mood: "Good-bye, my sweet land." Miners: "No, never again will you return!" Minnie and Johnson: "Good-bye my California!" Miners: "Good-bye! Never again, never again...." Minnie takes Johnson's arm. Minnie and Johnson: Good-bye, my sweet land, good-bye, my California." They go off stage. "Beautiful mountains of the Sierra, snow, good-bye!" Miners, in soft voices with great melancholy: "Never again will you return, never again!...." The crowd is in a state of dejection. Some are on the ground crying; others, leaning against their horses or the trees, give way to their grief; others again wave good-bye sadly to Minnie as she disappears. Sonora drops onto a fallen tree-trunk and bursts into loud weeping. Billy is quite unmoved by this emotional scene and continues his game, calm and cold. Minnie and Johnson: "Good-bye, my California, farewell!...."

_La Rondine_ — beginning upbeat to 46+5

Magda: "Tua madre oggi ti chiama! E devo abbandonarti perché tamo, non voglio rovinarti!" Ruggero: "No! Non lasciarmi solo!... No!"

[Ruggero] aggredendosi a lei intensamente: "Ma come puoi lasciarmi se mi se mi struggo in pianto, e disperatamente io maggrappo a te! O mia divina amante o vita di mia vita non spezzare il mio cuor!" Magda: "Non disperare, ascolta: se il destino vuole che tutto sia finito pensa ancora a me!" Ruggero: "O mia divina amante! O vita di mia vita!" Magda: "Pensa che il sacrificio che compio in questo istante io lo compio per te!" Ruggero: "No! Rimani! Non lasciarmi solo!" Magda: "Non voglio rovinarti!"

Afferrando fra le sue mani il volto di Ruggero, e fissandolo intensamente come se volesse imprimerisi negli occhi la visione ultima di questo dolore. Magda: "L'anima mia che solo tu conosci. L'anima mia è con te, ah! con te per sempre!" Ruggero reclina la testa, con abbandono, senza speranza.

Magda: "Lascia ch'io ti parli como una madre al suo figliuolo caro."

Magda, accarezzandolo dolcemente sui capelli: "Quando sarai guarito, te ne ricorderai! Tu ritorni alla casa tua serena, io riprendo il mio volo e la mia pena...." Ruggero: "Amore...." Magda: "Non dir niente...." Ruggero s'abatte singhiozzando. Magda: "che sia mio questo dolore!" Ora, Lisette appare dal padiglione. Vede. Intuisce. Avanza lentamente, s'avvicina a Magda, la sorregge. Magda ha un ultimo, lungo, tenerissimo sguardo verso Ruggero, accasciato, il viso tra le mani. Poi, appoggiandosi tutta a Lisette, che con il suo fazzoletto le asciuga le lacrime - s'avvia per il declivio, nel silenzio, fra i richiami delle campane, le ombre della prima sera e il sommesso singhiozzare dell'amante. Magda, internamente: "Ah!"

Magda: "Today your mother calls you! And I must leave you because I love you! I don't want to ruin you!" Ruggero: "No! Don't leave me alone!.... No!" Ruggero intensely clings to her: "But how can you leave me when I'm tormented with weeping, if desperately I cling to you! Oh my divine mistress, oh life of my life, don't break my heart!" Magda: "Don't despair, listen: if destiny wills that all be over, still think of me!" Ruggero: "Oh my divine mistress, oh life of my life!" Magda: "Remember that the sacrifice that I am making in this moment I am making for you!" Ruggero: "No! Stay! Don't leave me alone!" Magda: "I don't want to ruin you!"

She takes Ruggero's face in her hands and gazes intensely at him, in order
to engrave in her eyes this last vision of sadness. Magda: "My soul that only you know, my soul is with you, with you forever!" Ruggero drops his head, with abandonment, without hope. Magda: "Let me speak to you as a mother to her beloved son." She gently caresses his hair: "When the time comes when you are over our love, you will remember this. Return to your serene home, I will again take up my flight and my suffering."

Ruggero: "Love..." Magda: "Don't say anything..." Ruggero falls, sobbing. Magda: "Let this grief be mine!" Now Lisette appears from the lodge. She sees, she understands. She slowly approaches Magda and helps her. Magda takes one last, long, very tender gaze at Ruggero, who, in utter dejection, has his face buried in his hands. Then Magda, completely supported by Lisette, wipes the tears from her eyes with her handkerchief and starts to leave...in the silence amid the ringing of bells, the shadows of early evening and the soft sobbing of her lover. Magda, from afar: "Ah!"

**Il Tabarro** — beginning 99+6

[Michele] si erge terribile: apre il tabarro - il cadavere di Luigi rotola ai piedi di Giorgetta... gridando disperatamente e indietreggiando di terrore... afferra Giorgetta, la trascina e la piega contro il volto dell'amante morto.

Michele stands up, horribly! He opens his cloak, Luigi's body rolls out at the feet of Giorgetta. She screams desperately and retreats in horror. Michele grabs Giorgetta, drags her, and bends her against the face of her dead lover.

**Suor Angelica** — beginning upbeat to 81-4

Angelica, con disperazione: "Madonna! Madonna! Salvami! Salvami!"

A questa invocazione rispondono le voci degli Angeli che levano l'audio alla Madre delle Madri: "O gloriosa Virginum, sublimis inter sidera, Qui te creavit, parvulum, lactente nutris ubere." Il Miracolo: E il miracolo s'inizia. La chiesetta appare come gonfia di luce. Angelica: "O Madonna, salvami! Una madre ti prega, una madre t'implora! O Madonna, salvami!" Voci degli angeli: "Quod Heva tritus abstulit, Tu reddis alsum germine: Intetn ut astra flebiles, Ceili recludis cardines Glorios Virginum, Salve, Maria!" La porta della chiesa si chiude lentamente e fra uno sfogolio mistico si vedrà la chiesa gremita di Angeli. Sulla porta apparirà la Regina del conforto, solenne e dolcissima, e avanti a lei un bimbo, tutto bianco. Angelica: "Ah!" La Vergine, con un gesto dolcissimo senza toccarlo, sospenderà il bimbo verso la moribonda... [Angelica] nell'esasi della visione tende braccia verso il bimbo... Voci degli angeli: "Regina Virginum! Virgo fidelis sancta Maria, gloriosa virginum! Salve, Maria!" Il bimbo muove il primo passo... Voci degli angeli: "Mater purissima! Salve, Maria!" Il bimbo muove il secondo passo... Voci degli angeli: "Turris deividica! Salve, Maria!" Il bimbo muove il terzo passo. Suor Angelica cade dolcemente riversa e muore. Il miracolo sfoglia.

Angelica, in desperation: "Madonna! Madonna! Save me! Save me!"

To her plea, the voices of angels respond, raising the hymn of the Mother of Mothers: "Oh glorious Virgin, sublime among the stars. Thou who created a child and who sucked Him from Thy breast." The Miracle: And the miracle begins. The chapel appears as if flooded with light. Angelica: "Oh Madonna save me! A mother prays to you, a mother implores you!"

Angels: "What unhappy Eve took away from us, you gave back to us
through your marvelous offspring. And Thou revealed to us the poles of heaven in order that the mournful stars could enter. Glorious Virgin, Hail, Mary!" The door of the church opens slowly and within the mystic blaze of light she see the church crowded with angels. At the door appear the Queen of Solace, solemn and very sweet, and, in front of her, a little blond boy, all in white. Angelica: "Ah!" The Virgin, with a very sweet gesture, without touching him, urges the child towards the dying woman. Angelica, in the ecstasy of the vision, raises her arms towards the child. Angels: "Queen of Virgins! Faithful Virgin, Holy Mary, glorious Virgin! Hail, Mary!" The child takes one step... Angels: "Mother most pure, hail!" A second step... Angels: "Tower of David, Hail Mary!" And a third... Angelica falls back gently and dies. The miracle blazes forth.

Gianni Schicchi — beginning upbeat to 85

[Lauretta e Rinuccio] si abbracciano... [Schicchi] vede gli innamorati ...... si commove... sorride... togliendosi il berretto si volge al pubblico... LICENZIANDO14 SENZA CANTARE (recitato a piacere): "Ditemi voi, signori, se i quattrini di Buoso potevan finir meglio di così?... Per questa bizzarria m'han cacciato all'inferno... e così sia; ma, con licenza del gran padre Dante, se sasera vi siete divertiti, concedetemi voi l'attenuante!" Fa il gesto di appaudire... s'inchina e saluta il pubblico.

Lauretta and Rinuccio embrace. Schicchi sees the lovers, is moved, smiles, takes his cap off and turns to the audience... STEPPING OUT OF CHARACTER, WITHOUT SINGING: "Tell me ladies and gentlemen, if the money of Buoso could have ended in a better way than this? For this whimsy they've chased me to hell... and so be it; but with permission from the great father Dante, if this evening you've been amused, grant me the extenuating circumstances!" Schicchi makes a gesture of applause, bows, and waves good-bye to the audience.

The most prevalent characteristic of the final stage directions to the operas is that in every case, with one exception, the onstage principals perform some type of pantomime—i.e., dramatic action without singing. The nature of these actions is obviously related to the length of time from the final sung line to the end of the opera; and the directions range from a brief remark, as with Manon Lescaut, to a highly detailed set of actions, as in La Bohême. The only opera that does not end with a pantomime is La Fanciulla del West; as has already been pointed out, the characters in this opera continue to sing even as the

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14From "licenza." "In the 17th and 18th centuries, a passage or cadenza inserted into a piece 'at license' by a performer." The New Grove Dictionary of Opera, 4 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Press, 1992), II, 1254. While any cadenza could be called a "licenza," a traditional place for a licenza in the eighteenth century was at the end of an opera, and its traditional purpose was to address the audience directly—i.e., to step out of character—in a musical epilogue that was inserted into the work in honor of a patron's birthday, wedding, or such.
curtain descends. Although the chorus in Suor Angelica continues to sing up to the
beginning of the penultimate bar of music, it is offstage; on stage, Angelica, The Virgin
Mary, and the child follow very detailed stage directions for pantomime during "Il
Miracolo." While Suor Angelica does not include the chorus as a participant in the
pantomime, in Le Villi, Edgar, and Tosca, the chorus actively takes part in the concluding
seconds of stage action.

As noted above, in eight of the operas, the final dramatic climax involves the death
of one of the characters. The onstage responses to these deaths reflect two divergent
emotional poles. At one (perhaps unexpected) extreme is a sense of rejoicing. In Suor
Angelica the penitent nun's condemned soul is liberated by the Miracle, as heavenly voices
sing praises to the Virgin Mother. In Le Villi Anna excitedly proclaims "You're mine!" as
Roberto dies at her feet, and the exiting spirits sing "Hosanna!," congratulating Anna for
capturing Roberto's unfaithful soul. The other extreme is a response of shocked
devastation. In several cases one or more of the onstage principals is reduced to complete
awestruck silence. Both Edgar and Des Grieux, reduced to tears, cannot utter a single
word after their lovers' deaths.15 When Tosca leaps over the wall, all of the men are
shocked into silence. Although Pinkerton can be heard calling Butterfly's name from
offstage, when he and Sharpless eventually enter the house, both are literally
dumbfounded. The only response that Giorgetta can express when seeing Luigi's corpse
fall from under Michele's cloak is a terrifying scream. The solitary example of an
anguished verbal response is Rodolfo's repeated cry of "Mimi," as he throws himself onto
her deathbed; the remaining principals, all of whom have very specific stage directions,
remain completely silent.

15Similarly, at the end of La Rondine Ruggero, although not confronted with death, can only sob at the
loss of his beloved Magda.
Certainly one of the most piquant concluding stage directions is that one for *Gianni Schicchi*. As he re-enters the house, Schicchi is moved at the sight of his daughter and Rinuccio embracing on the terrace. Suddenly he interrupts the dramatic action, turns to the audience, steps out of character, and addresses the spectators in spoken words.\(^{16}\) He then solicits the applause of the audience, bows to them, and waves good-bye.

Finally, seven of the operas include specific directions for at least one character to cry openly at or near the opera's end. In six of these, the weeping characters include at least one male. Edgar loses "control of himself" and sob over Fidelia's corpse. Des Grieux "convulses into tears" as Manon dies. Rodolfo and Marcello both sob, although each in a different manner, over Mimi's death. At the end of *Madama Butterfly*, Sharpless picks up the child, kisses him, and openly sobs.\(^{17}\) The entire onstage male cast of *La Fanciulla del West*, with the exceptions of Rance and Billy Jackrabbit, is dissolved into tears by the opera's end. And Ruggero softly sobs alone on stage as the curtain descends on *La Rondine*.

What of the females? Musetta cries at the feet of Mimi, Magda wipes tears from her eyes as she leaves Ruggero, and Angelica cries out in desperation to be saved. However, only one female character, unlike the males, is completely overcome with weeping near the end of the drama, and even in this case, she is not allowed to lose herself completely in the emotion of the moment: as Tosca discovers that Cavaradossi has, in fact, been executed, she throws herself, sobbing, onto his body; but soon she hears Spoletta, Sciarrone, and the soldiers approaching, and the action quickly resumes. It is true that Butterfly falls to the ground weeping as Kate and Sharpless exit during the final minutes of the opera, but the action of the drama soon continues as she regains her composure.

\(^{16}\)This action of stepping out of character and addressing the audience, especially in a prologue or epilogue, is borrowed from the tradition of commedia dell'arte, as well as more serious theatrical genres of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

\(^{17}\)Curiously enough, although Pinkerton is certainly struck by the scene, there is no mention of him shedding even a single tear.
3. Aural impressions

The starting point for the following discussion of the final aural (musical) impressions made by each of Puccini's operas is a set of four questions:

- which character makes the final vocal utterance, and where is it sung (onstage or offstage)?
- does the opera end with a set piece, or does it end with some other musical structure?
- does the final musical motive of the opera recall material from earlier in the work, or does it appear for the first time?
- and lastly, what is the final disposition of the opera in musical terms (tempo, type of cadence, as so on)?

Of course, these topics often overlap with each other. As in the previous section, Turandot will be excluded from this discussion.

In most of the operas the final sung notes are delivered onstage. Yet there are four operas in which these lines are sung from offstage (see Table 4.4). In three of these, the final sung notes are part of a set piece; they occur as the singer or singers exit, and they thus make a diminuendo. The offstage angels in Suor Angelica are included here though they are never seen; one might safely assume that as the final miracle reaches its culmination (at the end of the opera), they are beginning their returning ascent to heaven. In the fourth case, Madama Butterfly, where the final vocal lines are sung by Pinkerton, before he and Sharpless make their last entrance, the dynamic level increases as Pinkerton draws closer to the house. Puccini sets the three calls of "Butterfly!" very thoughtfully for the voice: with each call, the otherwise fortissimo orchestra descends to piano, then returns to fortissimo immediately following the vocal statement. After the final offstage call, the orchestra not only makes a crescendo back to fortissimo, but does so tutta forza, thus ending the opera with a rush, rather than a trailing-off, of sound. As we shall see this forceful ending is unexpectedly off tonic.
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<td>pezzo concertato</td>
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Table 4.4: Offstage voices at the end of the opera

In those operas in which the final vocal utterance ends three or fewer measures from the end of the score, the final impression is a vocal one; and in those operas in which the final vocal utterance ends eight or more bars from the end, the final impression is orchestral. An exception is *Le Villi*, where the voices stop fifteen bars from the end of the score. Thanks to the fast tempo and the fact that the closing measures sound only various positions of the tonic chord, the end of this opera leaves a vocal impression.

In eight of the operas, one or more of the principals sings the final vocal lines (see Table 4.5). Also, in every case in which an opera ends with some type of orchestral coda, a principal has sung the final vocal line. As the table shows, it is most common for the final sung pitch to be the fifth degree of the tonic chord; in a few cases it is the root or third degree.
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<th>Final sung pitches</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnie, Johnson (offstage) — e(^4.5) (root of tonic chord)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners (tutti, TB) (onstage) — g(^#2.5) (3rd degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Rondine</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magda (offstage) — a(^b5) (5th degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magda (onstage) — a(^b4) (5th degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giorgetta (scream), Michele — c(^4) (root of tonic chord)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi (spoken lines)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauretta, Rinuccio, Schicchi (sung lines) — d(^b4), a(^b5)*</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root and 5th degrees of tonic chord)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sung by a chorus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le Villi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi, Spiriti (SATTBB) — g(^2.3.4.5) (root of tonic chord)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final principal: Anna — b(^b4) (3rd degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monks, Soldiers, Townspeople (SSTTBB) —</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b(^3), c(^#4), e(^4), g(^4), b(^4), e(^5), b(^5) (i.e., ii(^#4)(^2) chord)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final principal: Frank — f(^#3) (5th degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Suor Angelica</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voci degli Angeli (children, SATBB) (offstage) —</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c(^3.4.5.6) (root of tonic chord)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final principal: Angelica (onstage) — g(^5) (5th degree of tonic chord)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Final sung pitches of the opera
With so many deaths of leading ladies in Puccini's operas, one might assume that in very few of the operas would the final vocal utterance for a principal be sung by the soprano. This, however, is not the case. The soprano has the final solo vocal utterance in six of the operas, and sings with other principals in two additional cases (*La Fanciulla del West* and *Gianni Schicchi*). In only two cases does the tenor (i.e., the hero) sing the final solo vocal utterance alone (*La Bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*), and in both of these it is not a melody, but a cry of a single word on a single pitch. Perhaps even more unexpectedly, in three cases (*Edgar*, *Il Tabarro*, and *Gianni Schicchi*) it is a baritone who delivers the final lines by a principal.

The second question posed above asks whether or not each of Puccini's operas ends with a set piece. This question can be answered quite simply: five operas end with a set piece and six end with a transient piece (see Table 4.6). However, the means by which Puccini employed one or the other of these solutions to achieve a particular effect requires some clarification.
Operas ending with a set piece

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>chorus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>dialogue ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>dialogue ensemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Operas ending with a transient passage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[This piece is the final unit of Puccini's No. 10: *Gran Scena e Duetto Finale*, which also includes the final section of a transient passage, a duet (Anna, Roberto), and a two-section transient passage.\]

Table 4.6: Musical items from the dramatic climax until the end of the opera

All but one of the concluding set pieces (see Table 4.7) are around two minutes in duration. The exception is the concluding set piece of *La Rondine*, a dialogue ensemble for Magda and Ruggero, which runs more than twelve minutes in duration. Its scope almost rivals that of the "Love Duet" in Act I of *Madama Butterfly*. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set piece</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Approximate time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Le Villi</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chorus</td>
<td>Villi, Spiriti: SATTBB</td>
<td>02:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm: 137</td>
<td>Form: A Trans1 B A' Trans2 A&quot; Coda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edgar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue ensemble</td>
<td>Edgar, Tigrana, Frank, chorus (Monks, Soldiers,</td>
<td>02:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm: 36</td>
<td>Townspeople: SSTTTBB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form: A B A' Coda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>La Fanciulla del West</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
<td>Minnie, Johnson, Nick, Trin, Harry, Joe, Sonora,</td>
<td>01:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm: 17</td>
<td>Bello, Happy, chorus (Miners: TTBB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form: A B A'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>La Rondine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue ensemble</td>
<td>Magda, Ruggero</td>
<td>12:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm: 239</td>
<td>Form: A (=a b c b' a') B Trans C (=a a' b c trans a&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suor Angelica</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pezzo concertato(^a)</td>
<td>Angelica, chorus (Voci degli Angeli: children, SATTBB)</td>
<td>02:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm: 33</td>
<td>Form: A A' A&quot; Coda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)This piece has the only truly unique form within this group. Its musically strophic structure is appropriate to a hymn-like setting for the offstage angelic voices.

Table 4.7: Characteristics of ending set pieces
The types of set pieces for finales are limited to pezzo concertato, dialogue ensemble, and chorus. The single use of a chorus as the terminal set piece is in Le Villi, Puccini’s first opera. The chorus of Villi and Spiriti is a full participant in the dramatic action (the dancing to death of Roberto); it is not a static group that merely comments on the action of others. While this is the only terminal piece for chorus alone, three other final pieces make use of the chorus to varying degrees. One of these, the dialogue ensemble that ends Edgar, will be discussed presently. The other two are pezzi concertati (i.e., combinations of principals and chorus), and both conclude with offstage singing. In Suor Angelica the chorus is offstage while the principal character, Angelica, sings her final lines onstage. As has already been mentioned, there are two mute personages in Angelica’s presence (the Virgin Mary and Angelica’s child). In La Fanciulla del West the situation is reversed: the chorus concludes the opera onstage, and the two main principals exit singing. The "chorus" in this case includes not only the actual chorus of Miners but also several principals identified as such in the score with separate vocal lines (Nick, Trin, Harry, Joe, Sonora, Bello, and Happy). Also on stage are Rance (see above) and Billy Jackrabbit, who are at this point mute.

The two instances of dialogue ensembles that conclude operas have very little in common with each another, yet each has a characteristic that makes it somewhat anomalous among dialogue ensembles in general. The La Rondine piece, which is for only two characters and in general fits very comfortably within the dialogue ensemble category, contains a single four-bar vocal phrase in which the two characters sing in unison together, as if in a traditional duet. However, at this point in the piece the sentiments of the two characters, expressed in the texts, are quite dissimilar; Magda is remorsefully giving up her

\[18\] Anna and Roberto each sing one very brief line individually.
happiness for Ruggero's good, while Ruggero is in complete denial of Magda's circumstances.¹⁹ This is a very long piece, almost 240 measures running more than twelve minutes in duration; these four measures are the only instance of simultaneous singing.

The other dialogue ensemble that concludes an opera, occurring in the final moments of Edgar, is a departure from the normal dialogue ensemble in that one of its participating characters is the chorus. Here the chorus comprises a diverse group of monks, soldiers, and townspeople (voiced SSTTTBB), but within this piece the chorus as a whole never sings in conjunction with any of the principal soloists. This circumstance is unusual but not unique in Puccini's operas. A more famous example is the "Riddle Scene" in Act II of Turandot, where a chorus of eight basses (I Sapienti) and the main chorus (La Folla, STB) participate as collective characters, along with Turandot, Calaf, Altoum, and Liù, and never sing simultaneously with each other or any of the soloists.

The extended and somewhat complex form of the La Rondine dialogue ensemble is worthy of description (see Table 4.8). Dramatically, the piece begins immediately after Magda has accepted Lisette back into her service and Ruggero runs back onto the stage with a letter from his mother. It continues through four main dramatic events, each roughly corresponding to a primary musical unit of the dialogue ensemble. These episodes revolve more around Magda's impassioned dilemmas than Ruggero's resulting emotional disappointment: (1: the A section of the musical form) Magda's reading of the letter and her realization that their affair is now doomed, (2: the B section) her explanation of her past to Ruggero, (3: the transition) her telling Ruggero she must leave him, (4: the C section) and finally her actual dissolution of the relationship with the broken-hearted young

¹⁹Magda: "Think that the sacrifice which I make in this moment..." ["Pensa che il sacrificio che compio in questo istante..."]; Ruggero: "Oh my divine mistress! Oh life of my life!" ["O mia divina amante! O vita di mia vita!"].
man (via her exit from the stage). Each primary unit begins with one of Ruggero's lines; the progress of his naive plight is straightforward, as he proceeds with little subtlety from glowing youthful infatuation to shock and finally to utter dejection. Magda's emotional progress is more convoluted and is the principal focus.
Dialogue ensemble (Magda and Ruggero)

Form: A (=a b c b' a") B Trans C (=a' b c trans a")

A: 100 mm. starting at 37; F major; allegro affannoso in 4/8; andante lento in 2/4; più mosso-agitato in 4/8.
First sung line: Ruggero — "Amore mio!..." ("My love!...")

Form: a b c b' a'

a: 26 mm. starting at 37; F major; allegro affannoso in 4/8.
b: 23 mm. starting at upbeat to 38; F major; andante lento in 2/4.
c: 23 mm. starting at 39-7; F major; same tempo and meter; ends with fermata over rest.
b': 17 mm. starting at upbeat to 40; F major; overlaps with next section.
a': 12 mm. starting at 41; F major to A\textsuperscript{b} major to F major, più mosso-agitato in 4/8.

B: 50 mm. starting at upbeat to 43; F major; andante sostenuto e vibrato in 3/4.
First sung line: Ruggero — "Ah! Chi sei? Che hai fatto?" ("Ah! Who are you? What have you done?")

Trans: 29 mm. starting at 46; A minor, modulatory, V of A\textsuperscript{b} major; allegro moderato un po' agitato in 2/4.
First sung line: Ruggero — "Guarda il mio tormento!..." ("Look at my torment!...")

C: 76 mm. starting at 47+3; A\textsuperscript{b} major to B major, modulatory, D\textsuperscript{b} major; andante mosso appassionato [etc.] in 4/4.
First sung line: Ruggero — "Ma come puoi lasciarmi se mi struggo in pianto..." (But how can you leave me when I'm tormented with weeping..."

Form: a a' b c trans a"

a: 16 mm. starting at 47+3; A\textsuperscript{b} major; andante mosso appassionato.
a': 16 mm. starting at 48+3; B major to F\# major.
b: 8 mm. starting at upbeat to 49+3; B major to C\# major.
c: 9 mm. starting at 50; B minor to G minor to E\textsuperscript{b} minor; meno assai.
trans: 2 mm. starting at upbeat to 51-1; V of D\textsuperscript{b} major; lentamente quasi a piacere; overlaps with next section.
a": 20 mm. starting at 51; D\textsuperscript{b} major; andante calmo; lento.

Table 4.8: Structural outline of the final set piece of La Rondine
The secondary units of the lengthy A section, are set in an arch form: a b c b' a'.\textsuperscript{20} They too roughly correspond to dramatic moments: (section a) Ruggero enters with the letter and urges Magda to read it; (section b) Magda begins to read the letter, which expresses joy that the girl Ruggero is to marry will be the mother of his children; (section c) as Magda continues to read, and the letter describes the love of a mother and tells Ruggero that he is blessed to find such a virtuous love, she becomes more distressed; (section b') after pausing to collect herself, Magda continues to read the letter, which tells Ruggero to give Magda a kiss from his mother, and Ruggero tries to do so, only to be stopped by Magda; (section a') Ruggero asks why Magda has stopped him, and she tells him that her past will not allow her to enter his family home. Ruggero sings the first line of the outer segments, a and a', while Magda begins the three central units, b, c, and b'.

The scene is preceded by tonal closure, in D major, and silence. With Ruggero's entrance, the tonality shifts to F major and the orchestra present's the "Romance" motive,\textsuperscript{21} first heard at almost the beginning of the opera. Only the outer sections (a, a') of the arch form are based on this motive. The A section ends on a dominant-seventh of F, as Ruggero asks "Perche? Perche?"

The B section begins with Ruggero asking Magda to explain who she is and what she has done to cause her to be unworthy of his love. She tries to explain her past and tells Ruggero that she can be only his mistress, not his wife, but Ruggero will not listen. Tonally this unit remains in F major; however, the meter shifts from the previous duple meters to a more emphatic triple meter. Although this unit is based on new thematic material, its fundamental motive is a very distant variant of the "Romance" motive.

\textsuperscript{20}There are only three instances of this particular form in all of Puccini's operas; this one has very little in common with the other two, which are each located at the beginning of an act, Bohème/II and Rondine/I.

\textsuperscript{21}Macdonald, Puccini: \textit{King of Verismo}, 123. The "Romance" motive is the most prominent recurring motive in the opera and makes at least seven appearances in Act I, six in Act II, but only one prior to the present appearance in Act III. Its most recognizable appearance in the opera is during the coda of the most often heard excerpt from \textit{La Rondine}, Magda's Act I aria "Chi il bel sogno."
During the transition the tonality immediately shifts to the A minor area, followed by a series of parallel thirteenth chords, eventually arriving at dominant preparation for A♭ major, the first key of the C section. The transition is based mainly on two thematic ideas heard together earlier in this same act, just before Lisette and Prunier make their entrances, in the same key areas. At that point the A minor motive was heard as Magda, left alone onstage, realized that she needed to tell Ruggero who she really was but could not bring herself to do it. During the second motive, the parallel thirteenth chords, she convinced herself that she had to tell Ruggero the truth. Now, at the end of the act, Ruggero tells Magda that he is in torment, and she responds: now that his mother has contacted him, she must leave him (A minor motive). She tells Ruggero that it is because she loves him and does not want to ruin his life (thirteenth-chord motive). He then cries for her to not leave him alone (new transitional material).

The C section is configured in the ternary pattern of a a' b c trans a. In the sixteen-bar segment a, as Ruggero continues to beg Magda not to leave, the tonality is solidly in A♭ major; the conclusion of the segment is tonally closed. With Magda's response, in a', Puccini wrenches the tonality upwards (aurally a minor third) to B major for eight bars, and then again raises it (this time a perfect fifth) to F♯ major for the final eight bars. In the eight-bar segment b, the tonality returns to B major for the first phrase as Ruggero continues to beg, and then Puccini raises it a whole-step, to C♯ major, for Ruggero's more impassioned plea. This section ends on the I₆₄ chord, which functions as a secondary dominant in relation to the downbeat of the c section (a V⁹ in B minor). Segment c is particularly tonally unstable. In the first five of its nine measures, the tonality moves downward by major thirds, from B minor to G minor to E♭ minor, finally reaching V of D♭, in preparation for the a'' section. In c, Magda tells Ruggero that he is the only person that she has truly loved and that her heart will always be his. In the brief transition (two bars) to the final unit, Magda, in unaccompanied recitative, tells Ruggero that one day he
will understand. Her final word overlaps with the return of "a", which this time is set solidly in D♭ major, with a tempo of andante calmo. During it, Magda slowly makes her exit, leaving Ruggero sobbing alone on stage, while telling him that he will never know her sorrow.

Section C is based entirely on new material rather than recurring motives. As Magda leaves the stage, Puccini employs a wonderful bit of illusionary text painting: Magda's vocal phrase breaks off, incomplete; orchestral melodic material softly and slowly rises in pitch and then fades away, representing the swallow ("la rondine") flying away in the distance, returning to her home; and Magda's final pitch, a pianissimo at on "Ah!," is sung offstage. Interestingly enough, this is the same type of sentimental finale, both musically and dramatically, with which La Fanciulla del West, the immediately preceding opera, ends.

As mentioned above, six of Puccini's operas do not end with set pieces, but conclude with multi-sectional transient passages (see Table 4.9). Three of the six are preceded by a conventional aria, and in all three cases the aria is closed and ends with a fermata over the tonic. In the other three cases, the melodic material of the preceding set piece either breaks apart and eventually stops (La Bohème and Tosca) or simply dissolves into new thematic material (Gianni Schicchi).

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22As will be seen below, Puccini normally bases the final moments of his operas on recurring motives.
23The instrumentation is reduced to high strings, solo flute, and harp, and finally to bells alone. The final chord of the opera is scored for low strings, four muted horns, and timpani, all with dynamics of pianissimo and softer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Mm.</th>
<th>Vocal participants</th>
<th>Approximate time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>Manon, Des Grieux</td>
<td>07:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Bohème</em></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Rodolfo, Marcello, Musetta, Schauard, Colline</td>
<td>01:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Tosca, Spoletta, Sciarrone, chorus (Soldiers: TB)</td>
<td>01:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Pinkerton</td>
<td>01:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il Tabarro</em></td>
<td>166</td>
<td>Michele, Luigi, Giorgetta</td>
<td>04:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Schicchi (spoken)</td>
<td>00:45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9: Operas ending with a transient passage

These concluding transient passages range in length from a little less than a minute (*Gianni Schicchi*) to more than seven minutes (*Manon Lescaut*). Three are less than ninety seconds in duration (*Tosca, Madama Butterfly, and Gianni Schicchi*), and the beginning of each of these occurs immediately after a major dramatic event in the opera. In the case of *La Bohème* the concluding transient passage delicately follows Mimi drifting off to her final sleep.

The two longest concluding passages include dramatic action leading up to the opera’s climax, which subsequently occurs during the passage; the passage then proceeds to its termination. In *Manon Lescaut* this action begins as Des Grieux returns to Manon without having found any help; the lovers then express their ardor for one another as Manon slowly dies (the climactic moment). In *Il Tabarro*, the conclusive action begins as Michele lights his pipe, thus inadvertently signaling Luigi to return to the barge. The two

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25In *Tosca*, it is the heroine’s realization that Cavaradossi has, in fact, been executed. In *Madama Butterfly*, this passage begins at the completion of Butterfly’s ritual suicide. In *Gianni Schicchi* it begins with Schicchi’s discovery of the lovers Lauretta and Rinuccio finally united.
men fight; Michele fatally strangles Luigi; and, as the unsuspecting Giorgetta returns to the deck of the barge, Michele hides the corpse under his cloak. As he entices his wife to come sit by him, she approaches him, and he suddenly reveals Luigi's lifeless body (the climactic event).

Although these concluding transient passages include at least some type of vocal utterance, whether sung or (in the case of Gianni Schicchi) spoken, the final section of each is an orchestral coda that accompanies a staged pantomime (see above). These codas range from ten seconds to a little longer than one minute in length.²⁶ As will be seen below, the thematic material for these codas is in every case based on a motive heard earlier in the opera. Furthermore, this concluding motive is used to recall a previously presented dramatic thought or idea, rather than to recall a specific event or character.

The third question posed with regard to final aural impressions of Puccini's operas was, "Does the final motivic material of the opera recall previous material, or is it new?" Only Edgar and La Rondine conclude with newly-composed material. Both of these operas conclude with set pieces in the form of dialogue ensembles. While the Edgar finale is entirely newly-composed, the beginning of the La Rondine finale—described in detail above—does include some previously heard material. It begins with a recollection of that opera's "Romance" motive, and its transitional section is in essence a reprise of another transitional section heard earlier in the same act; on the other hand, its final major section, seventy measures long, is composed entirely of new material.

The other operas all conclude with motivic material that has been presented earlier. Le Villi, La Fanciulla del West, and Suor Angelica end with set pieces that are essentially

²⁶The orchestral conclusion of Gianni Schicchi is by far the briefest. The other five fall into two groups: two are a little less than thirty seconds in length (Tosca and Il Tabarro) and the other three around one minute in duration (Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, and Madama Butterfly).
reprises of earlier set pieces (see Table 4.10). Although the formal structure of these reprises is in some way altered from the original version, in all but one (La Fanciulla del West) the tonality remains the same for both versions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Final Set Piece</th>
<th>Original Set Piece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>ballet (choral)</td>
<td>ballet (instrumental)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
<td>pezzo concertato</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10: Operas concluding with a reprise of a set piece

The final set piece of Le Villi is a chorus ("Gira!... Balza!") which is almost entirely based on the Act II ballet that Puccini labeled "2°. Tempo, La Tregenda." Although the ballet is entirely instrumental in conception, the two pieces involve for the most part the same personages, the Villi and Spiriti (Wills-o'-the-Wisp in the ballet). Dramatically, the only essential difference between the two pieces is the addition of Anna and Roberto to the chorus, as she dances him to death. Both pieces are set in G minor, and have the same meter (2/4) and tempo (allegro non troppo). Puccini does not lighten or alter the orchestration for the reprise, despite the addition of the singing chorus. On the other hand, "La Tregenda," with 230 measures, is a little more than a minute longer than the "Gira!... Balza!" chorus, which has 137 measures.
The difference in lengths is related to a difference in formal structure. The form of the instrumental piece, excluding its five transitional sections, is a type of rondo (A B A' B' C A" B" A" Coda); the form of the chorus, on the other hand, is considerably less complex (A B A' A" Coda). The B section of the chorus is modulatory, while the corresponding section in the instrumental piece is tonally stable, and the coda of the chorus is longer than that of the instrumental piece by eight measures. There are minor variants in the recurring refrain as well. Most importantly from a dramatic point of view, the thematic material in the second transition of the chorus (as Anna claims Roberto's life) is based on newly composed material, not heard in the instrumental piece.

A motive from the first transition appears five other times in the final act, and is always associated with the Villi; however, none of these appearances is in the F minor tonality of its appearance in these two pieces. Also, the two melodic motives from section B do make two other brief appearances in the act, and both are likewise in conjunction with references to the Villi.

The final set piece of La Fanciulla del West is a pezzo concertato for Nick and all of the Miners, with Minnie and Johnson; it is a varied reprise of the most famous piece of the opera, the Act I pezzo concertato for Wallace (the minstrel) and the miners, "Che faranno i vecchi miei" (beginning upbeat to 20+3). Its form, setting, scoring, and content are substantially different from those of the original piece. The most obvious difference is the length: the Act I piece runs 118 measures in length and well over six minutes in duration, while the reprise is a mere seventeen bars long and less than two minutes in duration.

With such a difference in length, the formal structures of these two pezzi concertati are obviously quite different: A A' B A" B' Trans A" Coda and A B A' respectively.

While all of the A sections are based on the "Homesickness" motive, the B section from

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27 Complete form: A Trans1 B A' Trans2 B' Trans3 C Trans4 A" Trans5 B" A" Coda
28 Complete form: A Trans1 B A' Trans2 A" Coda
29 Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 106.
the later piece has nothing in common with the B sections in the earlier piece. Further, in
the initial A section of the Act III piece, while the Miners sing the "Homesickness" motive
to a new text, there is a superimposed statement of the "Minnie's Adoration for Dick
Johnson" motive, which is sung by Minnie and Johnson. So, in essence, rather than
being a true reprise, the Act III piece reiterates only the A sections of the Act I piece, with
new text: "Mai più ritornerai, no, mai più!"

As just stated, it is the "Homesickness" motive that is the basis for the final Act III
pezzo concertato of La Fanciulla del West. Every time it appears in the opera, it is in
relation to the Miners as a group. While it is mostly associated with the D major "Che
faranno...," its first appearance in the opera is in E major, during the second prelude to Act
I, where its opening melodic idea is sung offstage by an unnamed baritone (probably
Wallace, the camp's minstrel) to the text "Là lontano, là lontan, quanto piangerà!" (upbeat
to 2+8). The tonality of the Act III piece is likewise E major, rather than the tonality of the
"Che faranno..." or that of the other two statements of the "Homesickness" motive
elsewhere in the opera (Eb major and G major). Thus, just as the ballet from Le Villi
rounds out the last act both thematically and tonally, the return of this motive in its original
tonalit rounds out La Fanciulla del West as a whole.

With regard to the superimposed "Minnie's Adoration..." motive, sung by Minnie
and Johnson in section A, the issue of rounding is blurred considerably. Its initial
appearance in the opera is a statement in Act I, sung by Rance, in an unaccompanied
recitative that concludes in C# minor (upbeat to 80+5). Not only is this the lone appearance
of this motive in Act I, this is the only time in the opera that Rance sings it, and its text
refers to Johnson's appearance in the camp ("Uno straniero ricusa confessare perché so
trova al campo!"31). Other somewhat ambiguous appearances are in Act III, in three

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30 Ibid., 109.
31 "A stranger refuses to confess why he is in the camp!"
consecutive orchestral statements during the miners' chase scene (in F# minor, G# minor, and B♭ minor; beginning upbeat to 11+3). The dramatic significance of this motive is actually revealed in Act II (beginning at 22), where it plays a prominent role in the scene leading up to Minnie's and Johnson's love duet and becomes a major building block for the finale of that duet (beginning at upbeat to 20+5). Each of the Act II appearances of the motive is in a different key. Nevertheless, all the appearances are associated with Minnie's and Johnson's growing love interest. The final appearance of this motive, in the concluding pezzo concertato (upbeat to 44+8), is in F♯ minor and is sung by Minnie and Johnson between the phrases of the "Homesickness" motive sung by the Miners. Here, the motive is varied somewhat as the two lovers, who are now reunited, sing farewell to their beloved land ("Addio, mia dolce terra, addio, mia California!").

The tempo of this final set piece is andante lento, quarter-note=40, which slows to a rallentando for the final six bars. The dynamic level ebbs and flows from piano to an eventual fortissimo, which suddenly drops back to piano and continues to decrease until the opera ends ppp perdendosi. La Fanciulla del West ends with the lightest scoring of all of Puccini's operas. During the final five bars of the opera, the only instruments heard are very high sustained divisi first and second violins, a low sustained double bass, two harmonic harp chords, two ppp strikes of a gong, a single pppp strike of the bass drum, and finally a sustained ppp chord for the celeste.

The remaining reprise of a set piece, the pezzo concertato that ends Suor Angelica is the closest to a literal repetition of the model, a pezzo concertato found shortly after Angelica's famous aria, "Senza mamma," which begins the third and final major dramatic division of the opera (beginning upbeat to 64, with Angelica's text "La grazia è discesa dal cielo"). Their performing forces are quite similar: Angelica and an offset chorus (the

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32 The final set piece itself is in E major, although the key signature is one sharp.
first piece scored for Le Suore: SSA; the second for Le Voci degli Angeli: SSA, with the addition of children and modest use of TTBB). The tonality of the two pieces is the same, C major, as is their meter (4/4) and tempo (quarter-note=72, although the verbal designations are different: Moderato con moto and Andante appena mosso respectively). The difference in the length of the two pieces is only two measures: 31 and 33 measures respectively, both running between two and two-and-a-half minutes in duration. The formal structure of the earlier piece is A A' A"—i.e., musically strophic. In the later piece the A" section is varied and a coda is added. The two pieces have different texts, though both are in praise of the Virgin Mary.\textsuperscript{33} A major difference is that Angelica carries the majority of the melodic material in the first piece, while it is the offstage chorus that does so in the second, leaving Angelica free to continue her impassioned plea for salvation over the choral lines.

The A sections of both pieces are based on the "Benediction (The Miracle)" motive,\textsuperscript{34} and each of the six statements is based on the same harmonic progression, which includes a mediant chord near the middle.\textsuperscript{35} During the final A sections of both pieces, this mediant chord (E minor) is sustained for several measures (including a fermata) before the melodic material resumes. The held chord is an occasion for pantomime: in the first piece, Le Suore silently cross the stage in the background, going from the cemetery into their cells, creating an impression of the suspension of time; in the reprise, it is at this moment that the Virgin gently nudges the child towards Angelica. Upon her action, the offstage chorus suddenly bursts forth, fortissimo, with what one might call the "Virgin Mary" motive,\textsuperscript{36} thus confirming Angelica's salvation and reaching the climax of the miracle.

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\textsuperscript{33} An interesting note concerning the reprise is that Giovacchino Forzano, the librettist, has the heavenly voices singing in Latin, rather than Italian, while Angelica makes her pleas for salvation in the earthly Italian.

\textsuperscript{34} Macdonald, \textit{Puccini: King of Verismo}, 149.

\textsuperscript{35} There is only one additional appearance of the "Benediction (The Miracle)" motive, a brief statement of its incipit, in D major, during Angelica's aria "Suor Angelica ha sempre una ricetta."

\textsuperscript{36} Macdonald's "Prayer" motive, \textit{Puccini: King of Verismo}, 142.
Following the fermata, the dynamic level returns to pianissimo as the "Benediction (The Miracle)" motive returns in the orchestra. As the final A section concludes, the coda begins with a return of the "Virgin Mary" motive, which is stated three times in the key of C major. Finally, the opera concludes with an orchestral reprise of the last motivic idea of the final A section of the original piece, which gradually decreases in volume to pppp.

Six of Puccini’s operas end with a recurring motive that is not part of a reprise of a set piece, but is the orchestral coda to a concluding transient passage (see Table 4.11). In each case the final motive is stated in the orchestra, without any vocal utterance, and it accompanies some type of stage action (see above).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Motivea</th>
<th>First Appearance</th>
<th>No. of Appearances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>derivative of &quot;Manon&quot;</td>
<td>IV, m. 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>&quot;Future&quot;</td>
<td>IV, 19+23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>&quot;Child's Future&quot;</td>
<td>III, 7+3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>&quot;Cloak&quot;</td>
<td>II, 55+12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>&quot;Dexterity&quot;</td>
<td>I, 77+5</td>
<td>8b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td></td>
<td>I, 28+9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aMacdonald, *Puccini: King of Verismo*. 40, 78, 95, 139, and 156.
b31 individual statements

Table 4.11: Operas concluding with a previously heard thematic motive

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37The "Virgin Mary" motive is a recurring figure that is employed at least sixteen times in nine different places throughout the course of the opera. Most often it appears as a single statement, but during its first appearance in the opera, it is stated four times, all in Gb major. The other three prominent tonal areas for this motive are D major, C major, and E minor. Angelica is present for all statements of the motive, whether they are sung by her, played in the orchestra, or sung by other characters.
In all cases, the initial statement of the motive is a part of a set piece that appears relatively late in the opera. Three are first heard in arias.\textsuperscript{38} Two others play an important thematic role within an aria shortly after their first appearance.\textsuperscript{39} Only the closing motive of \textit{Manon Lescaut} has no affiliation with an aria; in this case the initial statement of the motive serves as the introduction to a dialogue ensemble. Three of the initial statements occur within the final act (\textit{Manon Lescaut, La Bohème,} and \textit{Tosca}), and two others occur well within the second half of the opera (\textit{Madama Butterfly} and \textit{Il Tabarro}). Only the "Dexterity" motive from \textit{Gianni Schicchi} surfaces relatively early in the work.

Perhaps not surprisingly, in view of the delayed initial emergence of these operas' final motives, the number of occurrences of those motives is relatively small. Two of the final motives are stated only once prior to the end of the opera (\textit{Manon Lescaut} and \textit{La Bohème}). In the case of \textit{Madama Butterfly}, while the terminal motive is stated three times before its last presentation, all three are within a single set piece.\textsuperscript{40} The three statements of the concluding motive of \textit{Tosca} heard before its final appearance occur within only two set pieces and are in very close proximity. Although at first glance it appears that the final \textit{Gianni Schicchi} motive, with seven statements prior to the finale, is exceptional, a closer look reveals that these numerous statements are clustered in only three locations in the score: near the beginning (two statements within Rinuccio's aria), near the middle (one statement), and during the denouement of the comedy (four statements). Likewise, the numerous statements of the relatively brief "Cloak" motive in \textit{Il Tabarro} occur in only three passages: three adjacent statements in Giorgetta and Michele's dialogue ensemble, seven in Michele's aria, and the remainder within the five sections of the opera's concluding transient passage. In both \textit{Manon Lescaut} and \textit{La Bohème} the final motive is stated at the

\textsuperscript{38}Colline's "Vecchia zimara, senti" in \textit{La Bohème}; Butterfly's "Che tua madre dovrà" in \textit{Madama Butterfly}; and Rinuccio's "Avete torto!...Firenze è come un albero fiorito" in \textit{Gianni Schicchi}.

\textsuperscript{39}Cavaradossi's "E lucevano le stelle" in \textit{Tosca}; and Michele's "Nulla, silenzio!" in \textit{Il Tabarro}.

\textsuperscript{40}Butterfly's aria "Che tua madre dovrà."
same pitch level as its only other statement. In each of the other four operas the final motive occurs at a different pitch level than its initial statement. Clearly Puccini felt free to transpose his motives to fit their various contexts.

As one would expect, each of the terminal motives has a dramatic association within its opera. Two are associated with a character (Manon and Schicchi); one refers to an inanimate item (the cloak in *Il Tabarro*); and two are presented in conjunction with an idea or concern voiced by one of the characters (the after-death relationship of Cavaradossi and Tosca, and Butterfly's concern for her child's welfare). The only terminal motive whose dramatic association is somewhat enigmatic is the final musical idea of *La Bohème*, which is based on the orchestral coda of Colline's aria, "Vecchia zimara, senti" (beginning at 19+23). Some scholars have chosen simply to ignore it, while others have minimized the recurrence as "a simple linear elaboration of the final tonic." Surely, with Puccini's prevalent use of reminiscence motives throughout all of his operas, this reminiscence is not just a coincidence. The dramatic association of the motive might be described as "final grieving farewell." The premise of Colline's aria is a farewell to his coat, which had been purchased during the Christmas Eve revelry of Act II. As suggested by the lines Colline had sung in Act II, the Act IV aria truly represents a sad parting, not a bit of false philosophic posturing. Just as the final measures of Colline's aria represent his grief over the loss of his beloved coat, the final bars of the opera represent the grief of the collective Bohemians, not just Rodolfo, for the loss of Mimi (note the very specific stage directions for each character).

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41 e.g., Macdonald.
43 As Musetta arrives in Act II and the subsequent commotion begins, Colline acknowledges her beauty, but goes on to say that he will never find himself in such a situation as Marcello and Alcindoro ("...mai Colline inopperà!") and that he is more pleased by a pipe and a Greek text ("Ma piaccionmi assai più una pipa e un testo greco.") than a woman.
The following summaries of the endings of those operas concluding with a restatement of an independent motive, rather than a reprise of a set piece, will begin just as the last major dramatic event in each work occurs (see above). In several cases these passages include one or two additional recurring motives.

The terminal phrase of *Manon Lescaut* arrives as Manon breathes her final breath. It functions as an eight-bar orchestral coda to Act IV, in the same tonality (F♯ minor) and same scoring as at the beginning of the act. The first five measures of the act, on which it is based—i.e., most of the brief prelude to the initial dialogue ensemble (see Chapter 3)—are in turn a derivation of the "Manon" motive,\(^{44}\) first heard in Act I and subsequently appearing more than a dozen times throughout the entire opera. The final motive is derived from the first two notes of the "Manon" motive, to which are attached the text "Manon" when these notes are first sung by the heroine in Act I: "Manon Lescaut mi chiamo" (upbeat to 27+9). Thus, the opera ends with the orchestra calling out the name of the expired heroine as Des Grieux silently throws himself onto her lifeless body.

The orchestral coda to *La Bohème* begins just as Rodolfo discovers that Mimì has died. Although the coda is orchestral in conception, Rodolfo briefly participates in it as he, upon discovering her death, twice calls out "Mimì" (both times on g♯4), while the orchestra continues its melodic material. This eleven-bar passage is set solidly in C♯ minor and begins with a tempo of *largo sostenuto*. Its initial *fortissimo* dynamic level quickly swells to *fff tutta forza*, before gradually diminishing to *piano*. Its initial motivic material is primarily based on the opening motive of the Mimi-Rodolfo dialogue ensemble beginning with the text "Sono andati? Fingevo di dormire..." (upbeat to 21+5). Just prior to the final four-bar motive of the opera (based on the coda of Colline's aria: see above), the dynamic

\(^{44}\text{Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 40.}\)
level begins to increase sharply in intensity to fortissimo, and at the *tutti* statement of the motive, the tempo slows to grave,⁴⁵ while the dynamic level fades away to *pppp*. From the moment that Tosca discovers that Cavaradossi has in fact been executed, the opera begins to draw to its relatively abrupt closing. The concluding passage has six sections in varying styles (recitative and orchestral), and the first five arrive in rapid succession, as Tosca realizes what has happened, and Spoletta, Sciarrone, and the soldiers enter and confront Tosca. Just as Tosca screams that she and Scarpia will meet before God, she jumps from the parapet, and the orchestra forcefully exclaims the "Future" motive.⁴⁶ This motive is better known for its use in Cavaradossi's aria "E lucevan le stelle" (beginning upbeat to 11+2), and many critics of *Tosca* have denounced Puccini's use of it to conclude the opera. Joseph Kerman has perhaps been the most famously vocal:

Tosca leaps, and the orchestra screams the first thing that comes into its head, "E lucevan le stelle." How pointless this is, compared with the return of the music for the kiss at the analogous place in *Otello*, which makes Verdi's dramatic point with a consummate sense of dramatic form. How pointless, even compared with the parallel place in *La Bohème*, where Rodolfo's surge of pain does at least encompass the memory of Mimi's avowal. But *Tosca* is not about love, "E lucevan le stelle" is all about self-pity; Tosca herself never heard it; and the musical continuity is coarse and arbitrary. Once again, this loud little epilogue is for the audience, not for the play.⁴⁷

Yet, as Macdonald has rightly pointed out, all three appearances of this motive are associated with the idea of life after death. The initial presentation of the "Future" motive comes as Cavaradossi is informed by the jailer that he has only one hour before his execution. The second occurs as Cavaradossi, in anticipation of his approaching death, tries desperately to write his farewell message to Tosca. And, as mentioned above, the final appearance of the motive occurs just as Tosca declares that her departed soul and

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⁴⁵The first statement of this motive had a tempo of allegretto moderato e triste, quarter-note=63.
⁴⁶Macdonald, *Puccini: King of Verismo*, 78.
Scarpia's will meet before God. As in the case of La Bohème, Puccini's choice of this motive for the opera's conclusion was neither by chance, nor "preposterous," nor trivial.

Kerman's description of the orchestra "screaming" is correct, as the dynamic level is *fff* *tutta forza con grande slancio*, with almost the entire orchestra playing the heavily accented melodic line. In turn, those instruments not playing the melody punctuate the downbeat of each measure with their even more strongly accented *fff* entrances.

The closing moments of *Madama Butterfly* encompass not one but three disparate motives originally presented in Butterfly's arias; all three are stated here in the orchestra. As the sound of the dagger is heard falling from behind the screen (the final major dramatic event of the opera), the opening orchestral motive of Butterfly's "Tu? piccolo Iddio!" (also sung by Butterfly in the aria's transition section) is restated as she staggers from behind the screen towards the child. Then, alternating with Pinkerton's offstage calls of "Butterfly," the "Climbing the Hill" motive is stated twice to underscore Pinkerton's final arrival. The motive was initially presented in Butterfly's aria "Un bel di vedremo" (at upbeat to 14-4), and it is stated twice in Act II and in five different places in Act III. Finally, as already mentioned, the terminal motive of the opera is the "Child's Future" motive, first heard in Butterfly's Act II aria "Che tua madre dovrà" (at upbeat to 55+12). At this pivotal point in the drama Sharpless has told Butterfly that Pinkerton may not return, and Butterfly has brought out her child to show Sharpless. In the aria, Butterfly says that she may be forced to dance and sing as a Geisha to provide food and clothing for the child, but then suddenly

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50 *Bass clarinet, two bassoons, contra-bassoon, three trombones, bass trombone, timpani, cymbals, and string bass.*
51 *Macdonald, Puccini: King of Verismo*, 92.

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proclaims that she will kill herself before doing so. At the moment of her death at the end of the opera, this is the motive that the orchestra forcefully wails as the curtain swiftly descends.

The final statement of the "Child's Future" motive is set in a modal B minor, with a flat-seventh. Its meter is C and its tempo is andante energico, quarter-note=88, which is somewhat slower than its initial Act II statement. The dynamic level is fortissimo tutta forza, with fff on the final bar as the entire orchestra plays the melody in unison. This melodic line is then punctuated (fff), on the second beat after each phrase ending, by timpani, cymbals, and brass chords. The final phrase ends with a unison B (tonic) for the entire orchestra, but its punctuation (also on the second beat) is a stridently contrasting G major chord for all instruments other than those in the bass. The tempo of the final four measures progressively slows to allargando, stentato, and finally to molto allargando.

The final major dramatic event of Il Tabarro occurs when Michele shows Giorgetta the lifeless body of Luigi, which Michele had hidden under his own cloak. At this point in the score, at 100, the orchestra presents one final statement of the "Cloak" motive as Michele forces Giorgetta's face onto the corpse. As already mentioned, this brief motive is stated more than thirty times within a relatively short period, and most of the settings are in C minor, as is the final one. However, the final statement of the motive is rhythmically augmented to double its original length. The meter is 4/4 and its erratic tempo begins mosso (selvaggio), quarter-note=120. In keeping with the shocking dramatic ending, Puccini eschews a specific dynamic level, instead merely specifying tutta forza, with a fortissimo marking appearing at the final bar. As with the final motives of Tosca and

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53 andante molto mosso, quarter-note=112
54 Puccini's detailed tempo marking for this section call for poco allargando on bar four, poco stringendo on bars five and six, allargando on bar seven, and allargando molto on bar eight, which ends with a fermata.
Madama Butterfly, Puccini uses almost the entire orchestra for the concluding statement of the "Cloak" motive;\(^{55}\) here the motive is harmonized rather than stated in unison.

The fast-paced comedic action of Gianni Schicchi begins to wind down as Schicchi returns from having chased Buoso's relatives from the house. Rinuccio and Lauretta are seen on the terrace through an open window as Schicchi rushes back into the bed chamber. He is moved by the young lovers' display of affection and he turns to address the audience. While Schicchi speaks, the orchestra plays the "City of Florence" motive\(^{56}\) (in G\(^b\) major), which was first heard in Rinuccio's aria, "Avete torto!..." (at upbeat to 32+3) in which he glorified some of this city's prestigious inhabitants, concluding with Gianni Schicchi. As Schicchi continues to speak, the orchestra slowly fades away to silence, whereupon Schicchi asks the audience to show its approval of his actions by their applause. As he bows and the curtain falls, the orchestra returns with one very quick and brash statement of the "Dexterity" motive,\(^{57}\) thus leaving the listener with one final impression of Schicchi's cunning. The tempo of this final fortissimo full orchestral statement is allegro deciso, which quickly proceeds to stringendo.

The last of the four questions dealing with the final aural impression of Puccini's operas concerns the musical character of the final moments of the opera. Does the opera end vocally or instrumentally? What is the nature of the final cadence? What is the meter and tempo of the final few measures of the opera? And what are the gradations of the dynamic level at the opera's terminus?

First of all, the six operas that were just discussed (those ending with a restatement of an isolated motive rather than a reprise of a set piece) all end with a predominantly

\(^{55}\) The only missing instrument is the flute, which does not play until the final bar of the opera.

\(^{56}\) MacDonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 157.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., 156.
instrumental, rather than vocal, setting—i.e., the motive is part of an orchestral coda. Further, these orchestral motives function as a type of coda, either to the act or the opera as a whole, summing up the dramatic and the musical materials.

The final moments of the remaining five operas (those three concluding with a reprise of a set piece and the two concluding with newly composed set pieces) are, on the other hand, more vocal in their disposition, ending with set pieces in which the final vocal utterances continue until almost the very end. As one might expect, there is great variation between the extremes in this category. In the case of Le Villi, after the final vocal utterance the orchestra continues for fifteen bars of coda built entirely on repetitions of the tonic chord. Although Edgar ends with a dialogue ensemble and the orchestra plays only the final three bars alone, the final section of the piece (sixteen bars in length) is more instrumental than vocal, with the orchestra carrying the melodic material rather than the singers. The most extreme case is that of La Fanciulla del West, where the singers continue to sing with accompaniment right up to the very end. And finally, the most common choice is to have the singers' final utterance during the penultimate bar of music, as is the case with La Rondine and Suor Angelica. In only two of these cases (La Fanciulla del West and La Rondine) is the final tonic chord reached before the voices stop.

Puccini exhibits a marked tendency to soften the impression of the final cadence in most of the operas by de-emphasizing the strong impact of the dominant-tonic progression. In fact, only in the comedy Gianni Schicchi, does Puccini use a simple V7-I perfect authentic cadence to terminate the work (see Table 4.12). In all the other operas, he lessens the overall sense of finality implied by a perfect authentic cadence by either using another type of cadence or modifying the authentic cadence to fit his dramatic purpose.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Tonality</th>
<th>Cadence</th>
<th>Uppermost pitch of final chord</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>ii₉ii₇-i</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>V-ii₉Ⅰ₂-i</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>f♯</td>
<td>III₄+Ⅳ₆-i-plus extension</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>c♯</td>
<td>VⅦ-i-plus extension</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>e♭</td>
<td>ii₉Ⅰ₂-I</td>
<td>fifth degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>V pitch-i pitch, then VI over i pedal</td>
<td>root (of VI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>ii₉Ⅰ</td>
<td>fifth degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>Db</td>
<td>vi₆-i₄vⅠ₂-Ⅰ₆₄-....-Ⅱ-I</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>VⅦ-i-plus extension</td>
<td>fifth degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Ⅰ₆₄-ⅤⅨ-....-Ⅰ</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td>G♭</td>
<td>Ⅶ-Ⅰ</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12: Final cadences

Four of the operas (Le Villi, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West, and La Rondine) end with some version of a ii₉-i or ii-I progression, a type of plagal cadence. The final cadence of Manon Lescaut, in F♯ minor, can be viewed as a type of Phrygian cadence, in which the final bass note is approached from above by a half-step. Here Puccini seems to suspend the progression of time by introducing a non-traditional cadential chord (III₄+Ⅳ₂) and placing a fermata over it; it occurs just before Manon breathes her final breath, which coincides with the arrival of the tonic. Des Grieux falls onto her body, and the orchestra continues until the close of the curtain, with the tonic chord twice alternating with its subtonic.

The remaining six operas all conclude with some version of an authentic cadence, with only Gianni Schicchi fitting the most traditional mold. These six do employ the dominant chord (either the dominant triad, possibly with seventh or ninth, or the dominant pitch alone) in the course of the final cadence, and in each case the chord is a major
dominant.\textsuperscript{58} These dominants are de-emphasized by Puccini's insertion of additional harmonic material before the final tonic chord is reached or, in the sole case of \textit{Madama Butterfly}, by completely blurring the final tonic chord. In \textit{La Bohème} and \textit{Il Tabarro}, the authentic cadence is presented as a traditional V\textsuperscript{7}-i, but additional motivic material follows the cadence, subduing its sense of completion. In \textit{Edgar} and \textit{Suor Angelica} the dominant chord is presented, but additional harmonic figures are inserted between it and the eventual final tonic.

As for the voicing of the final chord, seven of the operas end with a chord in root position and with the root in the uppermost voice as well (\textit{Le Villi, Edgar, Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, La Rondine, Suor Angelica}, and \textit{Gianni Schicchi}). Of those four operas ending with a note other than the root in the uppermost part, in three instances (\textit{Tosca, Il Tabarro}, and \textit{La Fanciulla del West}) the highest note is the fifth of the tonic chord. Only in \textit{Madama Butterfly} is the topmost pitch something else: the sixth degree of the scale in the key of B minor, understood here as the root of the sub-median triad. As explained elsewhere in this document, Puccini's approach to this authentic cadence is non-chordal—unison F\#s resolving to unison Bs—and he then adds an unexpected chord: a simple first-inversion G major triad. Puccini employed this chord strictly for its shock value. Certainly the imperfect position of the final chords in both \textit{Tosca} and \textit{Il Tabarro} are likewise used for shock purposes, to underscore the action onstage. The exact opposite can be said for the imperfect voicing of the terminal chord in \textit{La Fanciulla del West}, for Puccini is at this point employing every possible means, as previously discussed, to delay the drama's ending: the principals' voices seem merely to fade away into the distance as they disappear into the wings.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{58}There are several cases of cadential minor dominants throughout Puccini's operas.

\textsuperscript{59}This same effect is used at the end of \textit{Rondine/II}, where Magda and Ruggero exit arm-in-arm singing unison high Bs (the fifth degree of the tonic triad) that gradually fade into the distance as the curtain slowly descends and the orchestra makes a diminuendo to \textit{ppp}.
Concerning the final meters used in Puccini's operas, see Table 4.13. Only Edgar concludes in a compound meter, 9/8. This usage has the effect of metrically rounding out the third act as a whole. The act's first set piece, after the curtain rises, is a chorus in 12/8, and perhaps the musical high point of the middle of the act is Fidelia's aria, "D'ogni dolor...Nel villaggio d'Edgar" (25), which is set entirely in 6/8. As there are almost no other uses of compound meter within this act, these three pieces give the act an overall formal scheme based on meter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Final meter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>9/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13: Concluding meters of the operas

Of the eleven operas ending in simple meter, two are in duple meter, two are in triple, and the remainder are in quadruple meter. In those ending in triple meter (Manon Lescaut and Tosca), the final meter serves to round out the act rhythmically (as well as
thematically). In the case of the last act of *Manon Lescaut*, the initial and final musical materials are the same. In the third act of *Tosca*, the opening meter is duple (i.e., 2/2), but as the action begins (the entrance of Cavaradossi), triple meter arrives with a statement of the motive that will conclude the opera.

The duple meter that concludes *Le Villi* also serves to round out the action of the final act rhythmically, but in addition, it rounds out the action of the opera as a whole. In both acts, the onstage action begins in 2/4 with a tempo of allegro (allegro deciso and allegro non troppo respectively). The same is true for *Gianni Schicchi*, whose initial meter, although soon shifted to triple, and tempo (*Allegro, quarter-note=132*) are roughly the same as its final 2/4 meter and tempo (*Allegro deciso... stringendo*). Since quadruple meter, specifically 4/4, is the norm for the concluding meter of Puccini's operas, it would be difficult to make a case for any particular structural significance to this choice.

Table 4.14 presents the tempi for the concluding moments of Puccini's operas. In almost every case, his concern for just the right tempo for a specific moment can be seen in the numerous qualifiers he has employed as the opera draws to a close. In general terms, all of the operas end with a slow tempo, with the exceptions of *Le Villi* and *Gianni Schicchi*. *Le Villi* concludes with a reprise of the Villi's frantic dance from earlier in the opera, then their triumphant cries of "Osanna!" at the death of Roberto. As for *Gianni Schicchi*, the quick tempo of its brief orchestral coda is very appropriate to the opera's light-hearted ending.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Concluding tempo markings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>Allegro non troppo (Tempo della Tregenda)... stringendo sino alla fine... sentato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>Andante sostenuto, dotted-quarter-note=44, col canio...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Largo sostenuto... grave e sentato... ritardando molto...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>molto rallentando sentato...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>Tempo del Minueto dell'Atto 2.° ma più lento... molto rallentando... ritardando...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lentamente sostenuto... rallentando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>Largo sostenuto... poco rallentando... Grave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>Andante mosso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>animando... Allargando sostenendo... Andante energico,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>quarter-note=88... allargando sentato... molto allargando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>Andante lento, quarter-note=40... poco allargando... sempre lentamente... rallentando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>Andante mosso appassionato... Andante calmo...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rallentando ancora... Lento... rallenando molto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>Mosso, quarter-note=120... poco allargando... poco stringendo... allargando... allargando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>molto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>Andante appena mosso, quarter-note=72... allargando... ritardando... Meno, quarter-note=69... allargando... Lento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td>rallentando molto ritardando... a tempo [quarter-note=44]...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allegro deciso... stringendo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.14: Concluding tempi
The final musical element to be discussed with regard to the endings is dynamics. In choosing concluding dynamics Puccini always opted for the extremes, whether soft or loud (see Table 4.15). None of his operas ends with a simple piano or forte; these are always doubled, tripled, and even, in two cases, quadrupled. Of the five operas ending softly, all conclude with dramatically gentle finales. Three of these operas end with the death of the heroine (Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, and Suor Angelica), and none of the deaths are at all shocking to the audience; they are, in fact, rather sentimental demises. The other two, La Fanciulla del West and La Rondine, have sentimental endings as well. Five of the six operas that conclude loudly, in turn, conclude with deaths that are displayed for their shocking effect. Note the rejoicing of the Villi as Roberto dies at the feet of Anna's ghost, the extremely sudden stabbing of Fidelia, Tosca's leap from the parapet, Butterfly's dying as she reaches out for her child, and Luigi's corpse rolling out from underneath Michele's cloak. The loud dynamic level for the ending of Gianni Schicchi is there to sum up an evening of fun and deceitful frolic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opera</th>
<th>Dynamic of final bar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Villi</td>
<td>ff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>fff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>pp, crescendo and decrescendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Bohème</td>
<td>ppp, diminuendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>fff, tutta forza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madama Butterfly</td>
<td>fff, tutta forza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Fanciulla del West</td>
<td>pppp, perdendosi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rondine</td>
<td>pp, crescendo and decrescendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Tabarro</td>
<td>ff, tutta forza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suor Angelica</td>
<td>pppp, decrescendo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gianni Schicchi</td>
<td>ff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.15: Final dynamic level

4. Summary

Most of Puccini's final curtains descend quickly on shocking scenes of death set in minor tonalities. Invariably, if the final curtain descends slowly, it is on a sentimental scene in which Puccini wishes the audience to remain involved until the very last moment of music. By far, the most common characteristic of the concluding stage directions in Puccini's operas is the specification of pantomimed action for one or more personages.

The number and types of living characters on stage at the end of the operas varies. On the other hand, most of the operas end with a dead body on the stage, and when it is male, that death has been violent via an outside force. When the dead body is female, as is most often the case, the cause of death comes from a wider variety of possibilities; deaths of the females tend to be much more lingering than those of the males. In those operas that culminate with a death, the response is either one of jubilation or, as is most often the case,
one of extreme despair. Most frequently, when characters discover or witness the death of a character or experience the loss of a character, they are stunned into silence accompanied by non-verbal weeping.

Most often the final vocal line of a Puccini opera is sung on stage by one of the principals, and in eight of the operas it is the heroine who sings the final lines of the opera, either alone or as part of a group. If a male principal sings the final lines of the opera, it most often the baritone, not the tenor.

Five of the operas\(^60\) conclude with a set piece, and most often the final set piece includes some degree of choral involvement (one chorus, two pezzi concertati, and one dialogue ensemble). The durations of all but one of the final set pieces run from around two minutes to just under two-and-one-half minutes, and their formal structures are rather simple. The only lengthy concluding set piece, which also has an unusually complex formal plan, is the final dialogue ensemble of *La Rondine*. Of the six operas not ending with a set piece, all conclude with an orchestral coda to a multi-sectional transient passage, and most often these are preceded by a conventional aria that is musically closed.

In all but two cases (*Edgar* and *La Rondine*) Puccini's operas conclude with some type of musical material that has been heard earlier in the opera. In three of the operas, this is a reprise of a previously-heard set piece. Invariably the length of these reprises is less than that of the original material, and the formal design is less complex. Generally the reprise employs the same characters as the original set piece and is set in the same tonality. Six of the operas conclude with an orchestral statement of an individual motive heard earlier in the work (not necessarily at the same pitch level), representing dramatically a particular character, thing, or idea. In most cases, these motives belong to a set piece occurring relatively late in the opera. In each case, the concluding motive has previously been heard relatively few times.

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\(^{60}\)Excluding *Turandot* from consideration.
The six operas that end with a restatement of an isolated motive all end with a predominantly instrumental, rather than vocal, setting—i.e., the motive is part of an orchestral coda. The final moments of the operas that end with set pieces, on the other hand, are more vocal in their disposition, with the final vocal utterances continuing until (or almost until) the very end.

Puccini most often closes his operas with either some form of a plagal cadence or some form of an authentic cadence in which he has weakened the sense of finality associated with this cadence's dominant-tonic movement—for instance, by delaying the progression from dominant to tonic by inserting other harmonic material, or by completing the cadence but superimposing some type of additional material onto the tonic. Although almost none of Puccini's operas can be said to have a "perfect" cadence at its end, most often the final tonic chord is in root position with the root in the uppermost voice as well. Where "imperfect" voicing is employed, together with other effects, it is generally used to underscore a sense of shock.

Puccini's meter of choice for his finales is 4/4, and in all but two cases the operas end with slow tempos and specific tempo qualifiers. Finally, the operas end either very loudly or very softly, with no dynamic markings in the middle range. If the opera ends softly, the conclusion to the drama tends to be rather sentimental, whereas if the opera ends loudly, the dramatic conclusion tends to be more shocking.
CHAPTER 5

ENTRANCES AND EXITS IN FINAL ACTS

1. Introduction

Julian Budden, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, gives four somewhat related definitions of a "scene" in opera:1 (1) "The visible part of the stage (...It. *scena*)..."; (2) "The location of an opera, or an act or part of an act of an opera (...It. *quadro*)..."; (3) "A portion of an act during which the characters on the stage remain unchanged..."; and (4) "The Italian *scena*... is used for the free mixture of recitative, arioso and orchestral music that may precede a formal number."

The only Puccini libretti that designate scene divisions in the classical sense (i.e., entrances and exits of characters5) are *Le Villi* 6 and the first version and first major

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2 "...thus 'sulla scena', on the stage, 'derrière la scène', behind the stage. A band 'dietro la scena' is on the stage but unseen by the audience in a 'shallow' scene (*scena corta*, as opposed to *scena lunga*)."
3 "...By extension, the term is used for any part of an opera in a single location; thus an act may be described as 'in three scenes'. Until the mid-19th century scenes (in this sense) normally came to a clear conclusion and were followed by a pause to allow for a change of scenery... Later, scenes were often linked by instrumental interludes, a practice initiated by Wagner...." (Puccini uses this technique to link the two scenes in Act II of *Turandot*, as does Alfano in his completion of Act III, Scenes 1 and 2.)
4 "In this sense, a new scene begins whenever a new character enters or when one who was present departs; it is not uncommon for an early opera to have 20 or 30 scenes in an act. In much 18th-century opera each scene would normally culminate in an aria or an ensemble... This usage, which also applies to classical theatre (Shakespeare, Racine, etc.), was followed in opera up to the early 1890s; it is present in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* (1892) but not in Catalani's *La Wally* (also 1892) or later operas."
5 Budden's definition 3.
6 *Le Villi* was originally composed in one act (1884, unpublished) and was subsequently enlarged and then published in two acts (1885). The score was further revised three more times (1885, 1888, and 1892), each marked with a new publication.
revision of *Edgar* (1890 and 1892),\(^7\) all by Ferdinando Fontana. *Le Villi* and the first two versions of *Edgar* are also "number" operas, in which the musical numbers follow the scene divisions of the libretto (see Table 5.1). It should be noted that even as early as *Le Villi*, Puccini begins to break with operatic tradition by connecting some adjacent musical numbers with non-stop music (see the table), thus preparing the way for his future operas, which have essentially continuous music throughout each act.\(^8\) Thus, already in his first opera, Puccini exhibits a tendency toward his later structural fluidity. Of course, the use of traditional scene numbering and the relative continuity of the music are two separate issues; late eighteenth-century composers, for instance, had no difficulty writing continuous opera buffa finales set to librettos with classical scene divisions.\(^9\)

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\(^7\)The second major revision of *Edgar* dates from 1905.

\(^8\)It should be further noted that, according to Cecil Hopkinson, rehearsal numbers and numbers identifying "each of the arias, duets, and choruses" were not added to the score until the fifth version. *A Bibliography of The Works of Giacomo Puccini* (New York: Broude Brothers, 1968), 3-4. Thus, Puccini may have written one of the earliest "non-number" Italian operas, only to have it later published as a number opera. The instances of musical overlapping of certain "numbers" could lead one to this hypothesis. (Most sources—e.g., various *New Grove* articles, Grout's *Short History of Opera*, etc.—list examples from around 1892 as having been the earliest Italian examples of "continuous" music, yet Boito's revised *Mefistofele*, from 1875, has no numbers.)

\(^9\)The finale of Act II of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (number 15 in the score) comprises part of scene 8 through scene 12 of the libretto.
No. 1. Preludio (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)

ATTO PRIMO

Scena prima—Guglielmo, Anna, Roberto, Coro di Montanare e Montanari

No. 2. Coro d'introduzione — chorus (Mountaineers), Anna, Roberto, Guglielmo; all exit; Anna returns (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)
   a. chorus — "Evviva!"
   b. orchestral transition
   c. chorus — "Gira! gira! gira!"
   d. orchestral coda

Scena seconda—Anna

No. 3. Scena e romanza (Anna) — Anna alone, Roberto enters after the final words of her aria but before music stops (End of number: no tonal closure, music continues into next number without break)
   a. aria (Anna w/orch passages) — "Se come voi piccina"

Scena terza—Roberto e Anna

[No. 3, continued]
   b. transient passage (orch, Roberto, Anna)

No. 4. Duetto (Anna e Roberto) — Roberto, Anna (End of number: no tonal closure, music stops with open cadence followed by silence)
   a. duet (Roberto, Anna) — "Non esser, Anna mia"
   b. orchestral transition

Scena quarta—Montanari, Montanare, Guglielmo e Detti

No. 5. Preghiera (Anna, Roberto, Guglielmo e Coro) — Anna, Roberto remain; chorus (Mountaineers), Guglielmo enter; Roberto exits during coda (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)
   a. transient passage (orch, chorus, Roberto, Anna, Guglielmo)
   b. pezzo concertato (Guglielmo, Anna, Roberto, chorus) — "Angici di Dio"
   c. transient passage (Roberto, Anna, Guglielmo, chorus)
   d. orchestral coda

continued on next page

Table 5.1: Scene structure and musical structure of Le Villi: Opera-Ballo in due atti
Table 5.1 (continued)

ATTO SECONDO

PARTE SINFONICA

[Poem (8 lines): "Di quei giorni a Magonza una sirena..."]^b

No. 6. 1°. TEMPO - L'Abbandono [orch prelude w/chorus] — offstage chorus; silent funeral procession behind scrim; offstage chorus (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)

[Poem (16 lines): "V'è nella Selva Nera una leggenda..."]

No. 7. 2°. TEMPO - La Tregenda — ballet (orch) for Villi (female), Wills-o'-the-Wisp (male) (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)

Scena prima — Guglielmo

No. 8. Preludio e scena (Guglielmo) — Guglielmo enters, he exits (End of number: tonal closure; cadence overlaps with beginning of next number, music continues)
   a. orchestral prelude
   b. scena (Guglielmo) — "No! possibil' non è..."
   c. aria (Guglielmo) — "Anima santa della figlia mia"

Scena seconda— Coro di Villi interno, poi Roberto

No. 9. Scena drammatica—Romanza (Roberto) — offstage chorus (Villi);
   Roberto enters (End of number: no tonal closure, music stops with open cadence and fermata, then continues into next number without break)
   a. transient passage (orch, chorus, Roberto)
   b. aria (orch, Roberto) — "Torna ai felici di"
   c. transient passage (Roberto, chorus)
   d. aria (Roberto) — "O sommo Iddio!"
   e. transient passage (Roberto, orch)

continued on next page
Table 5.1 (continued)

_Scena terza — Roberto — Anna che appare sul ponticello_

No. 10. _Gran scena e duetto finale_ — Roberto remains onstage; Anna and chorus (Villi) offstage; Anna appears; chorus (Villi and Spiriti) enters; Anna and chorus exit; Roberto dead onstage (End of number: tonal closure, music stops with silence)

a. transient passage (chorus, Anna, Roberto)
b. duet (Anna, Roberto) — "Ricordi quel che dicevi nel mese dei fiori?"

_Ultima scena — Cori interni di Spiriti e di Villi, poi Roberto, poi Anna, poi le Villi, poi Guglielmo_

[No. 10 continued]
c. transient passage (chorus)
d. chorus (chorus, w/two words each for Anna and Roberto) — "Gira! Balza!"

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aPuccini's musical numbers from the score are in bold; Fontana's scene numbers from the libretto are in italics.
bSee Chapter 3.
Jay Nicolaisen, in his *Italian Opera in Transition, 1871-1893*, compares the scene structure of the three versions of *Edgar*, with brief notes concerning Puccini's musical alterations from version to version.\(^{10}\) As noted above, both the 1890 and 1892 versions of the libretto designate each entrance or exit as a *scena* and give it a number. As in *Le Villi*, the scenes roughly correspond to the musical numbers; however, according to Michael Elphinstone, "unlike *Le Villi*, *Edgar* blurs the divisions between the individual pieces."\(^11\) From Nicolaisen's remarks, it is clear that, despite the absence from the 1905 version of traditional scene designations, Puccini still understood "scene" according to characters' entrances and exits.

From *Manon Lescaut* (1893) onward the published librettos for Puccini's operas lack scene designations in the classical sense (i.e., reflecting entrances and exits). The only scenic structures noted in the scores and librettos are "quadri" (i.e., the location of an opera, an act, or part of an act\(^{12}\)). From this point onward, it is clear that Puccini's understanding of the formal division of a libretto is now based on locale rather than entrances and exits. With *Turandot*, both Acts II and III are divided into two scenes each in different locales; and in both acts Puccini employs the term *quadro*.\(^{13}\) However, in most of Puccini's operas "quadro" refers to the unchanging locale of an entire act. It is interesting to note that according to both the score and libretto, *La Bohème* is divided into four "quadri," rather than "atti" (see above Table 1.1).\(^{14}\)

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\(^{13}\) Acts II and III of *Turandot* are each divided into "Quadro primo" and "Quadro secondo."

\(^{14}\) Although the libretto and vocal score of *Madama Butterfly* both divide the opera into three acts, the orchestral score calls it a "Tragedia giapponese in due atti," with Act II divided into two parts, "Parte Prima" and "Parte Seconda"; since both have the same locale, Puccini here avoids the word "quadro." The seven section titles Giovacchino Forzano includes in the libretto to *Suor Angelica*—"La Preghiera," "Le Punizioni," "La Ricreazione," "La Ritorno dalla Cerca," "La Zia Principessa," "La Grazia," and "Il Miracolo"—reflect neither "scene" nor "quadri" but dramatic episodes within the one-act opera; the titles
In view of the change in convention that occurred early in Puccini's career, it is not surprising that in his letters he rarely identifies scenes explicitly according to characters on stage. (An exception is "the scene of Lisette and Prunier": see below.) Rather, he most often uses the word to refer to dramatic episodes ("the flower scene," "the card scene"). Still, in all cases that I have noticed, the episodes explicitly called "scenes" by the composer are in fact scenes in the classical sense: no entrances or exits occur within them. Puccini's comments thus appear to support the notion that the episodes bounded by entrances and exits were discrete events for him, even after they ceased to be identified as such in librettos. (Of course, this does not prevent him from constructing complex musical events that do encompass multiple entrances or exits.) In the following quotations emphasis is added by me.

In February of 1896, Puccini wrote to Giulio Ricordi concerning Act II of La Bohème:

...We need something more clamorous, and from everybody, so that the curtain may fall on an effective close. I suggest that we cut out the passing into the distance and the trumpet repeat, and close with a few additional bars in the orchestra, or else we could make a short scene with students, taking care, however, not to fall into an imitation of the end of Manon, Act I....

While working on the conclusion of the first act of Tosca, Puccini wrote to Don Pietro Panichelli, in August 1898, for help in finding a suitable prayer for the crowd to mumble in the background while Scarpia sings in the foreground:

...At the end of the first act in the Church of S. Andrea della Valle there is sung a solemn 'Te Deum' of rejoicing for a victory. Here is the scene: from the sacristy enter the abbot in his miter, the chapter, and all the rest, while the people watch the procession on either side. In front of the stage convey their general moods. While none of the titles is noted in the orchestral score, Puccini separates the episodes, with the exception of the last two, with musical silence.

one of the characters (the baritone) soliloquizes independently, or very nearly so, as to what is happening in the background....

On May 3, 1902, Puccini again was soliciting advice from Giulio Ricordi when he wrote:

About *Butterfly* you are right a thousand times; the flower scene must be more flowery. However, the duet could begin in stanzas with Suzuki outside and then continue in the way which you suggest, to the great interest, both scenic and musical, of the piece.... Apart from the fact that they are slightly Italian in character, both the music and the whole scene of this entrance are very effective....

Puccini, as was typical of him, was greatly involved in the writing of the libretto to *La Fanciulla del West* when he wrote to one of the librettists, Guelfo Civinini, on April 11, 1908:

...Meantime, as I have the copy, you can begin to study it with a view to an economical reduction of Act I, which I think is too long, especially in the card scene, and try to make it clearer and more living and convincing....

Finally, in late 1915 or early 1916, Puccini can be seen dictating his wishes to the librettist of *La Rondine*, Giuseppe Adami. Several of these suggestions were, for one reason or another, not used in the completed version of the opera.

...I have the idea...of making an entire change in the scene of Lisette and Prunier in Act III. You can be preparing it in the meantime. I should suggest that we make the two arrive on the scene [*sulla scena*: i.e., literally "on the stage"] to tempt Magda (seduction trio). Magda is very much upset at their departure (they have come specially to take her away from there), and when Ruggero comes in with his mother's letter she decides to go away.... I should lighten, i.e., shorten, the whole scene also of the tea. It is too wordy, and some of it is unnecessary. In the first act I should leave out the scene of the mistake and put the tenor's romanetta at the point where Rambaldo asks him, "E la prima volta che venite a Parigi?" The romanetta there; and then as a result let the hand-reading scene be short.

---

This chapter is concerned with units bounded by entrances and exits, whether or not they are discrete dramatic episodes. For the sake of convenience, they will be referred to here as "scenes," even though they are for the most part not so labeled by Puccini or his librettists. Adopting terminology associated with classical drama is admittedly awkward from time to time; entrances and exits occasionally occur in rather casual succession in Puccini's operas. In any event, using the word in this sense, the scene structure of the final acts of all the operas is outlined in Table 5.2; apart from \textit{Le Villi} the scene numbering in the table and the text below is of course purely editorial. In general, a scene will include sung dialogue or at least some type of explicit stage direction for the characters onstage. In the following discussion Puccini's scenes will be examined from a variety of points of view, including their approximate lengths; the relationship of set pieces to scenes; the behavior of scenes with different numbers of characters; and the tonal behavior of scenes and degree of closure at their conclusions. In addition, several whole acts will be shown to have large-scale formal designs based on scene structure.
Villi/I
1 {coro, SSA}, a corteggio funebre (behind scrim, mute)
2 Villi, Fuochi Fatui: ballet (mute)
3 Guglielmo
4 Roberto, {Villi}
5 Roberto, Anna's ghost, {Villi}
6 Roberto, Anna's ghost, Villi, Spiriti

Edgar/III
1 Ufficiale (mute), Sentinelle (mute), 4 Valletti (mute), Ragazzi, Soldati, Frank
   (disguised as Frate), Edgar, Monaci, Popolo, Fidelia, Gualtiero, 12 Frati
2 Frank, Edgar (Frate), Popolo, Fidelia, Gualtiero, Soldati, Monaci, Ragazzi (mute)
3 Tigrana, Edgar (Frate), Frank
4 Soldati, Popolo, Monaci, Edgar (Frate), Frank, Tigrana, Fidelia, Gualtiero

Manon/IV
1 Des Grieux, Manon
2 Manon
3 Des Grieux Manon

Bohème/IV
1 Rodolfo, Marcello
2 Rodolfo, Marcello, Schaunard, Colline
3 Rodolfo, Marcello, Schaunard, Colline, Musetta, Mimi
4 Rodolfo, Schaunard, Colline, Mimi
5 Rodolfo, Mimi
6 Rodolfo, Mimi, Schaunard
7 Rodolfo, Mimi, Schaunard, Musetta, Marcello
8 Rodolfo, Mimi, Schaunard, Musetta, Marcello, Colline

Tosca/II
1 {un Pastore}, Sentinello (mute), Carceriere, Picchetto di Soldati (mute), Sergente
   (mute), Cavaradossi (mute)
2 Carceriere, Cavaradossi
3 Cavaradossi, Tosca, Spoletta (mute), Sergente (mute), Carceriere (mute)
4 Tosca, Cavaradossi, Drappello di Soldati (mute), Spoletta (mute), Ufficiale (mute),
   Sergente (mute), Carceriere (mute)
5 Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead), {Spoletta}, {Sciarrone}, {Alcuni Soldati}
6 Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead), Spoletta, Sciarrone, Alcuni Soldati (mute)

continued on next page

Table 5.2: Scenes in the final acts of the multi-act operas and the final major dramatic sections of the one-act operas

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Table 5.2 (continued)

Butterfly/III
1  {Marinai}, Butterfly, Suzuki, Dolore (mute)
2  Sharpless, Pinkerton, Suzuki, Kate (in garden, mute)
3  Sharpless, Pinkerton, Suzuki (in garden, mute), Kate (in garden, mute)
4  Sharpless, Kate, Suzuki
5  Sharpless, Kate, Suzuki, Butterfly
6  Butterfly, Suzuki
7  Butterfly, Dolore (mute), {Pinkerton}, Pinkerton (mute), Sharpless (mute)

Fanciulla/III
1  Rance, Nick, Ashby (asleep, mute), Billy (asleep, mute), 5 uomini (asleep, mute)
2  Rance, Nick, Ashby, Billy (mute), Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy,
   Uomini del Campo
3  Rance, Nick, Ashby, Billy (mute), Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy,
   Uomini del Campo, Johnson
4  Rance, Nick, Ashby, Billy (mute), Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy,
   Uomini del Campo, Johnson, Minnie

Rondine/III
1  Magda, Ruggero
2  Magda
3  Lisette, Prunier,
4  Lisette, Prunier, Maggiordomo
5  Lisette, Prunier
6  Lisette, Prunier, Magda
7  Lisette, Magda
   -- (Magda: see text below)
8  Magda, Ruggero
   -- (regarding ending, see text below)

Tabarro/B
1  Luigi, Giorgetta
2  Luigi, Giorgetta, Michele
3  Luigi, Giorgetta
4  Giorgetta, Michele
5  Michele, {2 amati, in the shadows}
6  Michele, Luigi
7  Michele, Luigi (dead), Giorgetta

Angelica/C
1  Angelica
2  Angelica, Genovieffa, Suore
3  Angelica, {Voci degli Angeli}
4  {Voci degli Angeli}, Angelica, La Vergine (mute), Il Bimbo (mute)

continued on next page
Table 5.2 (continued)

Schicchi/B
1 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Buoso Donati (dead)
2 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Spinelloccio
3 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto
4 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto
5 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Lauretta
6 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto
7 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Rinuccio, Il Notaio, Pinellino, Guccio
8 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Il Notaio, Pinellino, Guccio
9 Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto
10 Rinuccio (on terrace), Lauretta (on terrace)
11 Schicchi, Lauretta (on terrace, mute), Rinuccio (on terrace, mute)

Turandot/III
1 Calaf, {La Folla}, {8 Araldi}
2 Calaf, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla, Gruppo di Fanciulle (mute), 8 Soldati, Timur (mute), Liù (mute)
3 Calaf, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla, Soldati, Timur, Liù, Turandot, Carnefice (mute)
4 Calaf, Turandot, {Voci femminili}, {Ragazzi, Tenori i & II}
5 Turandot, Calaf (mute), Aloum (mute), Corte, Dignitari, Sapiente, Soldati, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla

*Characters whose names appear in braces are heard from offshore.*
The number of scenes in each concluding act and the concluding dramatic sections of *Il Tabarro* and *Suor Angelica* ranges from three to eight, with five being the average. *Gianni Schicchi*, with eleven scenes in its final section, is exceptional because of the fast-paced comedic style of Puccini's only comic opera, which has characters coming and going, at times in relatively quick succession.

2. Final acts with large-scale formal design based on scene structure

In the concluding acts of *Edgar*, *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, *La Fanciulla del West*, and *La Rondine*, the changing numbers of characters on stage appear to form large-scale patterns that are supported by the relative durations of the scenes and by the positions of strong cadences (though not by large-scale key plans). In the chronologically adjacent *Edgar*, *Manon Lescaut*, and *La Bohème*, the apparent patterns are varieties of arch form. In *Edgar/III* almost the entire cast is onstage for the first two scenes, with only Tigrana missing. (A number of mute officials and pages leave the stage after Scene 1.) The center of the arch is Scene 3, marked by the mass exit of everyone except Frank and Edgar and the entrance of Tigrana, leaving only three persons onstage. At Edgar's summons the masses return (Scene 4); the act is thus rounded off with another crowd scene. Each of the crowd scenes (1, 2, and 4) is tonally closed and followed by silence, while the trio scene (Scene 3) leads directly into Scene 4 both tonally and rhythmically. While changing cast size creates a "rounded" effect, the time allotted for each scene steadily decreases from the beginning of the act to the end,\(^\text{20}\) thus compressing the action as it moves toward its rather abrupt climax and quick denouement.

The ternary pattern that occurs in Act IV of *Manon Lescaut* is similar but constructed on a smaller scale. This briefest of all the final acts lasts less than twenty minutes; it is constructed of only three scenes and employs only two characters, Manon and

\(^{20}\text{14:55, 12:30, 07:55, and 05:35.}\)
Des Grieux. The act begins with the lovers wandering, hopelessly lost in the wilderness. They sing a dialogue ensemble and a duet, then an orchestral passage ushers Des Grieux offstage to look for help. In Scene 2 Manon is left alone, and she sings the aria "Sola, perduta, abbandonata!" Just as she is about to collapse, Des Grieux rushes back onto the stage, and they express their final words of love before Manon dies. The symmetry created by the framing duo scenes is mirrored in the relative durations of those scenes, with the central aria being the briefest.\textsuperscript{21}

The arch design of Act IV of \textit{La Bohème} is a little more complex, and it is an inversion of the pattern established in \textit{Edgar} and \textit{Manon Lescaut}. The act begins with only Rodolfo and Marcello on stage, thus placing the initial dramatic emphasis on them. In Scene 2, Colline and Schaunard are added, bringing the number to four, and the focus shifts to the male Bohemians as a unit. With a sudden interruption of the dramatic flow, the number is again expanded by two, with the addition of Musetta and Mimi, increasing the number to six. Now the focus, although centered on Mimi’s illness, includes all of the principals. Scene 3 is also the longest scene of the act and serves as its pinnacle. With Scene 4, Musetta and Marcello exit, decreasing the number of onstage characters to four, and the focus shifts to Colline and Schaunard, who each react to Mimi’s pitiful situation in his own way. After Colline concludes his aria, "Vecchia zimarra senti," he and Schaunard exit, and the number of characters decreases to two, Mimi and Rodolfo. Now, in Scene 5, the dramatic attention is re-focused on the two lovers, who have a chance to express their feelings for one another one last time. With Mimi’s coughing spell, the arched form reverses itself and the stage begins to re-fill for the drama’s climax and denouement. In the very brief Scene 6, Puccini brings back Schaunard. In Scene 7 Musetta and Marcello return, and finally, in Scene 8, with the return of Colline, all of the major characters are present to experience Mimi’s death personally, each in his or her own way. The musical

\textsuperscript{21}10:20, 04:45, and 07:00.
flow of the act as a whole, with respect to the scene structure, steadily progresses towards the final scene: although Scene 1 ends with tonal closure, its rhythmic motion continues into Scene 2, and none of the remaining scenes is tonally closed until the last.

Unlike the acts just discussed, the third act of La Fanciulla del West does not have an arch form; instead, the number of characters on stage increases from its first scene to its final scene. As the act opens, several men are asleep; only Rance and Nick are awake and engaging in dialogue. Other miners enter (Scene 2), and the men already onstage are awakened by the others; all join Rance and Nick for the "chase" episode. In the middle of the set piece that encompasses the chase, Johnson is brought in, bound and on horseback (Scene 3). Just as the miners are about to lynch Johnson, Minnie is heard from offstage; she then enters on horseback, ushering in the final scene of the opera. Not only do the successive scenes add characters; in addition, each is longer than its predecessor.22

The scene structure of the final act of La Rondine makes another arch form:

A   Ruggero and Magda
B   Magda (brief)
C   Lisette and Prunier (with brief appearance of Maggioridomo)
D   Lisette, Prunier, and Magda
C   Lisette and Magda
B   Magda (very brief)23
A   Ruggero and Magda24

2203:45, 04:05, 07:30, and 09:55.
23This is one place that does not lend itself to classical scene numbering (see Table 5.2). As Lisette exits at the end of Scene 7 (37-6), she is ushered off stage with exit music that comes to a complete stop, thus leaving Magda momentarily alone on stage. Ruggero is then ushered on stage with entrance music (37). I have not identified Magda's momentary presence alone as a "scene": no text occurs here, and she is given no specific stage directions. Still, the evocative exit and entrance passages (each just a few measures in length), dramatize Magda's moment alone onstage.
24The conclusion of the final scene of La Rondine is another place where classical scene numbering breaks down. As the opera is drawing to a close and Magda is about to leave Ruggero, Lisette makes a momentary entrance (52-2). She says nothing; according to the score, "She sees, she understands," and "she slowly approaches Magda and helps her" make her final exit, which, in turn, leaves Ruggero alone onstage for the final moments of the opera. Although Lisette's appearance is important, it is not noted at all by musical means, and the set piece merely continues to its end, with Magda singing the final note of the opera offstage.
As the act begins, Ruggero and Magda are onstage together. They sing a dialogue ensemble, followed by a duet and another dialogue ensemble. Then Ruggero sings a brief aria and is subsequently ushered off the stage by an orchestral coda, in a manner quite similar to Des Grieux’s exit in Manon/IV. In a very fleeting little scene Magda resolves to tell Ruggero about her past, then quickly exits; there is no cadence at this point. Just as she exits, Lisette and Prunier enter and sing a dialogue ensemble; after a momentary interruption by the butler, they sing another dialogue ensemble. Magda reenters and welcomes Lisette back into her service as maid. Prunier leaves for a return to Paris and Magda and Lisette renew their relationship; then Lisette quickly enters the house, leaving Magda momentarily alone on stage. Lisette’s exit music comes to a complete stop with non-traditional tonal closure (II-I) and silence. Suddenly, accompanied by new entrance music, Ruggero runs on stage with the letter from his mother, and the lengthy final scene progresses to Magda’s exit. As can be seen, the act begins and ends with duo scenes for Magda and Ruggero. These frame an "interruption" by Lisette and Prunier (sections C D C above), which is in turn framed by Magda’s brief moments alone. Interestingly enough, the first duo scene, the "interruption," and the concluding duo scene are all relatively the same length in time.25

3. Length of scenes

The lengths of scenes within final acts and final sections of one-act operas vary from around thirty seconds26 to almost fifteen minutes,27 with the majority lasting from about three minutes to eight minutes. About a fourth are less than three minutes in length, while several are longer than eight minutes.

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25Scenes 1 and 2 (sections A and B), 12:25; Scenes 3–7 (sections C, D, and C), 10:35; and Scene 8 (sections B and A), 12:15. See Table 5.2 for scene numbers.
26Bohème/IV/6 for Mimi, Rodolfo, and Schuano, and Rondine/III/Sc4 for Lisette, Prunier, and Magda’s Maggiordomo.
27Edgar/III/Sc1.
The eleven longest scenes (see Table 5.3) are nearly all either duo scenes (seven cases) or massive crowd scenes, in which nearly the entire cast of the opera is on stage (four cases). The single exception, Vil/AI/Sc4 for Roberto alone, has been described by Carner as "possibly the longest solo scene in all Italian opera." Long scenes might occur anywhere in the final act; three of the twelve are first scenes (see the table), and two are final scenes (Fanciulla/III/Sc4 and Rondine/III/Sc8).

28 Carner, Puccini: A Critical Biography, 2nd edition (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1974), 308. In the 3rd edition of this monumental Puccini study (1992), Carner couches his observation in more careful language: "one of the longest solo scenes...." (337) Carner also observes that "none of Puccini's later lovers is characterized in as many shades of anguish, passion and despair and with the same active participation of the orchestra as is the hero of his first opera." (337) Earlier in his book, Carner quotes a letter from soprano Teresa Stolz to Verdi, written the day after the La Scala premiere (January 24, 1885) and commenting on this particular scene: "...Then the tenor [Andrea Anton] appears to sing in a long dramatic scene; the orchestra, which is very elaborate, entirely covers the tenor's voice. One sees him open his mouth and gesticulate but it's only every now and again that one hears some shouts on the high notes, and that is all. This piece made no effect, either — all descriptive music in which the singer appears to do little more than mime...." (45).
## Scenes with one or two characters on stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Onstage Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc4</td>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>Roberto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV/Sc1</td>
<td>10:10</td>
<td>Manon, Des Grieux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc3</td>
<td>09:05</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc1</td>
<td>10:55</td>
<td>Magda, Ruggero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc8</td>
<td>12:05</td>
<td>Magda, Ruggero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc4</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Giorgetta, Michele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc4</td>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Turandot, Calaf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Scenes with almost the entire cast of the opera on stage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Missing Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc1</td>
<td>14:55</td>
<td>Tigrana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc2</td>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Tigrana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc4</td>
<td>09:35</td>
<td>Wowkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc3</td>
<td>14:20</td>
<td>Altoum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Scenes longer than eight minutes in duration

Perhaps not surprisingly, most of the lengthy scenes contain several set pieces, and most conclude with tonal closure (though not usually in the keys in which they began), possibly followed by musical silence. Still, considerable variety is evident; for instance, Rondine/III/Sc8 is a single lengthy dialogue ensemble for Magda and Ruggero (described in Chapter 4 above), while at the other extreme Rondine/III/Sc1, for the same two characters contains five set pieces: two dialogue ensembles, a duet, an aria for Ruggero, and an orchestral coda that accompanies the tenor’s exit. Each concludes with tonal closure. In one case, there is musical overlap between a lengthy scene and the next scene: Tosca/III/Sc3 concludes with a lengthy duet for Tosca and Cavaradossi, which continues into the next scene, as the firing squad, Spoletta, the Sergeant, and the jailer enter. The form of the entire duet is $A (=a b) B (=a b) C (=a a' b a'' coda) A' Trans D Coda$, with the scene change occurring between the transition and $D$.  

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Only two of these long scenes begins and ends with the same tonic, Tosca/III/Sc3 (which was just described) and Edgar/III/Sc1. Not surprisingly, they are particularly unified in structure. The opening scene of Edgar/III is based on three set pieces and is followed by silence. The first piece is a chorus ("Requiem æternam!") set solidly in B♭ minor, whose concluding V-i cadence overlaps with the beginning of the next set piece. The second piece, also a chorus ("Del Signor la pupilla"), begins in a rather unstable E♭ minor and finally progresses to F major. Its conclusion is not closed; it ends with a dominant chord (C major), extended in a brief orchestral transition that concludes with musical silence (an eighth rest), although the rhythmic motion continues into the next piece. The final set piece of this scene is the aria-pezzo concertato "Addio, addio mio dolce amor," for Anna and the chorus. Its form is A A' B Trans C C' Coda; it begins in F major and progresses to B♭ major during the transition, then concludes in that key with a perfect authentic cadence. Thus, the overall harmonic structure of this scene is i-iv-V-V/IV-V-I.

At the other end of the time spectrum are the eighteen scenes that are two minutes or less in duration (see Table 5.4). Only eight are from the multi-act operas. The others all take place within the final dramatic sections of the one-act operas, with six occurring in the quick-paced Gianni Schicchi alone.29 Among the final acts of the multi-act operas, Rondine/III has by far the greatest number of these short scenes (four), a trait that is possibly a holdover from this opera's original conception as a Viennese "comic" operetta. The earliest appearance of a scene two minutes or less in duration within a concluding act is Scene 6 of Bohème/IV, and its duration is only about thirty seconds, making it one of Puccini's shortest scenes.

29In the classical sense, Schicchi/B/Sc5, which runs around forty seconds, actually contains three very short scenes, the first and the last running less than ten seconds each. See below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Onstage Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scenes with three or fewer characters on stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc6</td>
<td>00:30</td>
<td>Mimi, Rodolfo, Schaunard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc5</td>
<td>01:10</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc4</td>
<td>01:40</td>
<td>Kate, Suzuki, Sharpless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc2</td>
<td>00:50</td>
<td>Magda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc4</td>
<td>00:30</td>
<td>Lisette, Prunier, Maggiordomo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc5</td>
<td>01:30</td>
<td>Lisette, Prunier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc7</td>
<td>00:45</td>
<td>Magda, Lisette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc1</td>
<td>01:45</td>
<td>Giorgetta, Luigi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc2</td>
<td>01:05</td>
<td>Giorgetta, Luigi, Michele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc6</td>
<td>01:55</td>
<td>Luigi, Michele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc4</td>
<td>01:40</td>
<td>Angelica, La Vergine (mute), Il Bimbo (mute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc8</td>
<td>01:15</td>
<td>Lauretta, Rinuccio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc9</td>
<td>01:00</td>
<td>Schicchi, Lauretta (mute), Rinuccio (mute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scenes with a large number of characters on stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc6</td>
<td>00:45</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead), Sciarrone, Spoletta, Alcuni Soldati (mute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc1</td>
<td>01:20</td>
<td>Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Buoso Donati (dead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc2</td>
<td>01:50</td>
<td>Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Spinelloccio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc5</td>
<td>00:40</td>
<td>Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto, Lauretta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc9</td>
<td>01:30</td>
<td>Schicchi, Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, Betto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: Scenes less than two minutes in duration
The typical short scene has only two or three characters. The principal exception is a group of four scenes for Schicchi and the Donati relatives in which the eight relatives mostly function as one. Only in the concise final scene of Tosca is there a chorus (Soldiers) onstage so briefly.

Of the eighteen brief scenes, eight do not modulate and six of those end with tonal closure; half of those six are the final scenes of their respective operas. Each of the other three cases involves a character appearing briefly and exiting quickly. In Tabarro/B/Sc2 Michele interrupts the conversation of Luigi and Giorgetta, then leaves; in Rondine/III/Sc4 Magda's Maggiordomo, who sings one line of recitative, momentarily interrupts a squabble between Lisette and Prunier and then leaves to announce their arrival to his mistress; and in Schicchi/B/Sc2 Maestro Spinelloccio enters, sings a few lines of recitative, and exits. Each of these three scenes ends on tonic. In each of the two scenes from the one-act operas the final chord is held through the scene change, as Michele and Spinelloccio make their respective exits. At the end of the La Rondine scene, however, the rhythmic flow continues uninterrupted while the Maggiordomo exits and the squabbling couple begins the next scene.

In the nine cases where brief scenes do not end with tonal closure, seven conclude with some form of a dominant-function chord (V, V⁷, i₆, V⁹, etc.), enabling the music to continue into the next scene, or the final chord to be held through. The remaining two cases do not belong to the realm of functional harmony. In the case of Butterfly/III/Sc4, the final chord (E minor) has no clear tonal context. The final chord of Rondine/III/Sc2, an E¹₃, is neither cadential nor clearly tonal.

Not surprisingly, nearly all of these very brief scenes are either transient passages (or portions of transient passages), or portions of set pieces that begin or end in adjacent scenes. For instance, the brief Tabarro/B/Sc6 and Tabarro/B/Sc7, along with the longer

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Tabarro/B/Sc8, together contain a dialogue ensemble for Luigi and Giorgetta, into which Michele enters, takes part, and exits. In the case of Angelica/C/Sc4, noted in the score as the beginning of the miracle ("E il miracolo s'inizia"), the final set piece of the opera (a pezzo concertato for Angelica and the offstage Voci degli Angeli) has already begun before La Vergine and Il Bimbo make their appearance. In the case of Schicchi/B/Sc11, Schicchi's final entrance interrupts and overlaps with the ending of the meteoric little duet for Lauretta and Rinuccio, which has filled all of Schicchi/B/Sc10; thus, Schicchi/B/Sc11 contains a very brief portion of a set piece. Only Schicchi/B/Sc2 (Spinelloccio's scene) and Schicchi/B/Sc9 (the final confrontation of Schicchi and the Donati Relatives) consist primarily of single set pieces, ensembles in both cases.

4. Relationship of set pieces to scenes

In the final acts of the multi-act operas and the concluding major dramatic sections of the one-act operas, the number of set pieces per scene ranges from zero to five. Fourteen scenes contain not even a portion of a set piece; in other words, the scene is all or part of a transient passage. Almost one-half of the scenes comprise a single set piece (or contain at least a portion of one), while twelve scenes contain two and nine contain three. Only two scenes incorporate more than three set pieces: Rondine/III/Sc1, which runs almost eleven minutes, has five, and Turandot/III/Sc4, part of the Alfano/Toscanini ending, runs almost eleven-and-one-half minutes and has four set pieces.

As just mentioned, fourteen scenes are made up entirely of transient passages (see Table 5.5). Several of these scenes are among those two minutes or less in duration, and in each of these relatively brief scenes the dramatic action is very condensed and succinct.

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31 Two dialogue ensembles and a duet for Magda and Ruggero, Ruggero's aria "Dimi che vuoi," and an orchestral coda that closes the scene and functions as exit music for Ruggero.
32 All relatively short dialogue ensembles, with the exception of Turandot's aria "Del primo pianto."
In some cases—not surprisingly—the transient passage includes entrances and exits and therefore spans more than one scene; see the entries in the table for _Tosca_, _Madama Butterfly_, _Il Tabarro_, and _Gianni Schicchi_. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Approximate time</th>
<th>Characters on stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV/Sc3</td>
<td>07:15</td>
<td>Manon, Des Grieux</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frantic entrance of Des Grieux; the lovers declare their love; death of Manon.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/6</td>
<td>00:30</td>
<td>Mimi, Rodolfo, Schaunard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hearing Mimi's coughing spasm, Schaunard runs into the apartment; Mimi tells Rodolfo and Schaunard that the spasm is now over.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/8</td>
<td>02:10</td>
<td>Mimi, Rodolfo, Marcello, Musetta, Schaunard, Colline</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Colline quietly enters and asks about Mimi; Rodolfo begins to notice the countenance of the other Bohemians; he suddenly realizes that Mimi is dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc6</td>
<td>00:45</td>
<td>Tosca, Spoletta, Sciarrone, Soldiers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tosca is weeping over Cavaradossi's body; entrance of Spoletta, Sciarrone, and Soldiers; Tosca's leap to her death; shock of all on stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc4</td>
<td>01:40</td>
<td>Sharpless, Suzuki, Kate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrance of Suzuki and Kate from garden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc5</td>
<td>07:40</td>
<td>Sharpless, Kate, Suzuki, Butterfly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrance of Butterfly; confrontation with Kate; exit of Kate and Sharpless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc2</td>
<td>00:50</td>
<td>Magda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Magda, alone onstage, decides that she must tell Ruggero of her past; exit of Magda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc4</td>
<td>00:30</td>
<td>Lisette, Prunier, Maggiordomo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisette and Prunier are together onstage; Lisette hears something; it is the Maggiordomo who enters carrying some letters on a tray; he sees Prunier and asks him if he wishes for him to inform his mistress of Prunier and Lisette's presence. Prunier says yes and the Maggiordomo bows and exits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc6</td>
<td>04:00</td>
<td>Lisette, Prunier, Magda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrance of Magda; Lisette asks to return to Magda's service; Prunier tells Magda that Rambaldo stills waits for her; Prunier exits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc7</td>
<td>00:45</td>
<td>Magda, Lisette</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisette tells Magda that she is glad to be back in her service, and Magda tells her maid that she has missed her; Lisette runs offstage and quickly returns dressed in her full maid's uniform, bows and then returns to the house.</td>
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</tbody>
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continued on next page

Table 5.5: Scenes containing only transient passages

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Table 5.5 (continued)

Tabarro/B/Sc6 01:55 Michele, Luigi
Michele, already onstage, lights pipe; Luigi enters; they fight and Michele strangles Luigi.

Tabarro/B/Sc7 02:15 Michele, Giorgetta
Michele hears Giorgetta calling him from offstage and hides Luigi's corpse under his cloak; Giorgetta enters and approaches Michele, who opens his cloak, revealing Luigi's body; Michele forces Giorgetta's face against the face of the corpse.

Schicchi/B/Sc1 01:20 Schicchi, Relatives
Schicchi asks the relatives who else knows about Donati's death and he begins to rearrange the room; ends with appearance at the door of Maestro Spinelloccio, the doctor.

Schicchi/B/Sc5 00:40 Schicchi, Relatives, Lauretta
Funeral knell heard offstage; Gherardo exits to get information; Lauretta enters, comments about the bird on the terrace, and exits; Gherardo enters and explains that the death bell is for the Bishop's butler.
Rondine/III/Sc2 is unique among all the scenes in Puccini's operas. As the scene begins, Magda has been left alone on the stage. She then resolves that she must tell Ruggero of her past. This is, of course, an ideal operatic situation for an aria, in which the character pours forth her emotions as she movingly comes to terms with an important decision in her life. Here, however, Magda merely comes to a decision, then exits, all in a matter of less than a minute. In all the other solo scenes in the final acts of Puccini's operas, the lone character on stage sings an aria.

One of the briefest of all the "scenes" in Puccini's final acts and dramatic sections of the one-acts is the episodic Schicchi/B/Sc5, which runs approximately forty seconds. This dramatic episode is actually three very brief scenes, with the first and last running less than ten seconds each. Just before this episode begins, Schicchi and the Donati relatives are making preparations for the rogue's plan. Suddenly, a funeral knell is heard from outside, and Gherardo quickly exits to get any information he can. In order to stall the action while waiting for Gherardo's return, Puccini has Lauretta make a sudden entrance from the terrace, and she informs her father that the little bird ("l'uccellino") does not want any more crumbs to eat, whereupon her father tells her to give it a drink and promptly sends her back onto the terrace just as Gherardo returns.

Two of the scenes containing no piece, Manon/IV/Sc3 and Butterfly/III/Sc5, are far from brief. Each runs longer than seven minutes in duration and is surprisingly rather dramatically static. From a dramatic point of view, only three things happen in the final scene (and final transient passage) of Manon Lescaut, Manon/IV/Sc3: Des Grieux's frantic entrance and announcement to Manon that he cannot find any help, Manon's and Des Grieux's final expressions of their love for one another, and Manon's gradual death. Musically, however, this scene is in an almost constant state of flux. A fine example of a transient passage, it is outlined here in detail:
a very brief recitative, during which the key shifts from the F minor of the preceding aria, Manon's "Sola, perduta, abbandonata" (which ends with a plagal cadence and a held tonic pitch, during which applause generally occurs), to D♭ major. Here (16) Des Grieux runs on stage and Manon falls into his arms.

a fifteen-bar arioso in which Des Grieux sadly tells Manon that he found no help and they passionately lament her "morbid delirium." Here the 3/4 meter of the remainder of the act is established; the tempo, lentamente, will ebb and flow as the transient passage continues. During this segment the key wrenches upward a whole step to E♭ major; though the arioso ends with a V♯-I cadence, the rhythmic motion continues into the next segment.

three statements—two orchestral, one sung by Manon—of the beginning of the "Manon" motive (upbeat to 17+2). The motive was first heard in Act I as Manon introduced herself to Des Grieux. Here Manon passionately expresses her love as the rhythmic motive of the ensuing segment is introduced.

a fifteen-bar arioso (beginning 17+6) for Manon in which her passionate expression of love continues, with the dynamic level growing from pp to ff then returning to pp. This segment is modulatory and progresses toward G♭ major, ending on a leading-tone fermata.

four bars, beginning at 19, making a cadence in G♭/F♯ minor. Des Grieux touches Manon's face and notes softly to himself that she has the "chill of death."

an eight-bar arioso for Manon (upbeat to 20-4), in F♯ minor, based on the "Desolation" motive that was first heard in Act III. She sadly notices Des Grieux's tears and asks him to kiss her. The arioso ends with an authentic cadence, but the rhythmic motion continues into the following section.

an exchange in recitative (beginning upbeat to 21+2), in which Des Grieux expresses love and Manon softly but feverishly ("febrilmente") cries—in a descending line accompanied by descending augmented chords—that "the flame goes out." The final word of the segment is Manon's soft "Ahimè" in a muffled voice ("soffocato"). The segment begins in B minor and ends, with a brief pause, on V of F♯ minor.

an eight-bar parlante for Manon (upbeat to 22+3) over a return of the "Desolation" motive in the orchestra, ff and tutta forza in F♯ minor. Here she begs Des Grieux to bring his face near hers, then, with a spasm, she again sighs "Ahimè!"

a recitative exchange, beginning with a tonal shift upward to G major (23+2), in which Des Grieux expresses desperation and Manon grows gradually weaker. The opening of this segment is again based on the beginning of the "Manon" motive; Manon's recitative, over a G major tonic pedal, grows gradually slower, softer, and thinner in instrumentation until only her voice is heard for the final word, sung on the fifth degree of the chord and followed by a rest with a fermata (24).

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33 MacDonald, Puccini: King of Verismo, 40.
34 Ibid., 47
• return of the flutes and clarinets (upbeat to 24+2) with an agitated series of chromatic V\(^7\) chords endings, with a chromatic progression, on a D major chord, over which Manon laments her impending death and Des Grieux cries out in anguish, "Mio Dio!" Silence follows.

• a passage in parlante (25), beginning over a statement of the "Luxury" motive in D minor,\(^{35}\) during which Manon dies. She sings her final words weakly over very transparent instrumentation: the pitch A in the viola alone, to which are added C\(^\#\) and E\(^\#\) played by a pair of flutes in the low register, followed finally by a low G in the harp and clarinet. All of these instruments hold through a long fermata until Manon breathes her last on the word "muor." The "Luxury" motive that begins this segment was first heard in Act II (16+2), where it was a bright minuet in A major, with Alberti-bass accompaniment, played during Manon's dance lesson in her luxurious boudoir in Geronte's Paris residence. At the end of the opera it is stripped of its frivolity: it is set in D minor, in Tempo del Minueto dell' Atto 2.\(^{o}\) ma più lento, and played "tristamente," with long instrumental accompanying notes instead of the Alberti figures, and with the bass drum struck quietly (pppppp) on alternating downbeats. The moment of Manon's death (25+8) overlaps with the beginning of the coda.

• the final eight-bar coda, in F\(^\#\) minor, scored for the entire orchestra, during which Des Grieux convulses into tears and falls unconscious on Manon's body. The orchestra then twice cries out the opening two notes of the "Manon" motive—the dynamic level swelling and falling each time—thus ending the opera with Manon's name, just as it had begun the final act. The curtain rapidly descends during the penultimate bar as the orchestra fades into silence.

Butterfly/III/Sc5 is equally static from the perspective of dramatic action, though emotionally much tenser than the final scene of Manon Lescaut; this tension heightens continually throughout the scene's lengthy course. As Suzuki, Kate, and Sharpless come to terms with the situation, Butterfly's voice is suddenly heard offstage. She runs into the scene, asks about Pinkerton, and frantically searches the room for him. When she sees Kate, she asks Sharpless who the woman is, a question that is followed by musical silence. Butterfly asks what Kate wants—again, silence. As Butterfly asks several other questions, each is followed by musical silence. Finally, Sharpless reveals that Kate is Pinkerton's

\(^{35}\)Ibid., 45.
wife and they have come to take Butterfly's child. Kate asks Butterfly for her forgiveness, and as Sharpless and Kate exit, Butterfly tells them to return in half-an-hour. In no other scene in all of Puccini's operas does musical silence play such an important role.\(^{36}\)

5. Paired set pieces within a single scene

All types of set pieces figure in the various scenes in the final acts of Puccini's operas, and in most of the scenes that contain multiple set pieces, the set pieces are of varied types (aria, duet, pezzo concertato, dialogue ensemble, etc.). However, there are six scenes in which two set pieces of the same type, for the same character or characters, are separated only by a transient passage or, in one instance, have no transient material separating them.\(^{37}\)

There are three pairs of adjacent arias (for Roberto in Villi/II/Sc4, Johnson in Fanciulla/II/Sc3, and Liù in Turandot/III/Sc3), and while they display some similar characteristics, each is individual in construction. They perhaps represent a holdover from the early and mid-nineteenth-century practice of composing double arias, separated only by an interruption by another character or characters (the *tempo di mezzo*).\(^{38}\) However, none of the three pairs exhibit any of the formal principles involved with the pairing of the cantabile and cabaletta, other than the aforementioned interruption.

The two arias for Roberto in Villi/II/Sc4, along with the transient passages that precede, follow, and separate them, make up Puccini's *No. 9: Scena Drammatica—Romanza* (see Table 5.1), "Atto secondo, Scena seconda" in the Fontana libretto. The first aria, "Torna ai felici di," is by far the longer of the pair, running over five minutes

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\(^{36}\)Concerning musical silence, Carner singles out Puccini's "masterly use of dramatic pauses—especially at points of the highest tension where they achieve a degree of eloquence far beyond the power of any words or music. He himself referred to such pauses as 'musica sottintesa'—'implied music'." *Puccini*, 312.

\(^{37}\)A pair of like adjacent set pieces whose details will not be discussed here is the set of dialogue ensembles for Calaf and Turandot in Turando/III/4. They were completed by Alfano.

(with a primary tempo of *andante mesto*), and is the most structurally complex of the six arias in the three aria pairs. It is divided into two large sections, the second a varied repetition of the first, and the order of thematic material is rearranged in the repetition. It is set solidly in B♭ minor and concludes with an authentic cadence and full stop. Its dramatic content is Roberto's remembrance of happier days gone by and his current feelings of sadness. During the modulatory transition between the two arias, running a little more than two minutes, Roberto tries to bring himself to knock on Anna's door and hears the cries of the Villi (offstage). In the second aria, "O sommo Iddio," whose beginning overlaps with the end of the transition, Roberto states that he would gladly give his life for Anna's forgiveness. It is in C minor and quite brief (about one minute in the tempo of *andante religioso*), and although it does end with a full cadence, the rhythmic and harmonic momentum continues into the next item with a sudden shift in tonality (to B♭ minor) and tempo (to *allegro vivace*). The first aria is clearly the more important of the two, and while the dramatic content of the second aria certainly follows logically from the sentiment of the first, the two pieces are, other than their similar slow tempos (*andante mesto* and *andante religioso*), completely unrelated musically. Unlike the other aria pairs, this one provides the principal content of a solo scene, with only Roberto on stage.

The second pair of arias, which occur in the third act of *La Fanciulla del West*, are likewise dramatically related, but unlike the pair just discussed they are both short and relatively equal in duration (about ninety seconds and about two minutes respectively). Further, they are part of a scene populated by almost the entire cast (only Minnie and Wowkle are missing), and they are addressed to other characters, whereas Roberto's were reflective monologues. In the first, "Risparmiate lo scherno," Johnson tells the miners that death means nothing to him and asks to speak of his beloved Minnie. In the following transition the miners express outrage at his request, Sonora tells them to let Johnson speak, Johnson thanks Sonora and tells the miners that Minnie must never know he has died, and
Rance agrees to allow Johnson to briefly speak further. In the second aria—"Ch'ella mi creda libero," perhaps the most famous excerpt from *La Fanciulla del West*—Johnson asks that Minnie be led to believe that he is free, on a path of redemption, and he then calls her the flower of his life. The first aria, in ternary form, is in G minor, and the second, a simple pair of stanzas, is in Gb major. The first has a tonally ambiguous ending, as only the vocal line and bass end on the tonic while the interior lines move to another, unidentifiable, tonality. The final cadence of the second aria overlaps with the beginning of the ensuing passage. Although their meters are different (2/2 and 4/4 respectively), their tempos are exactly the same (*andante sostenuto*, half-note=40, and *andante molto lento*, quarter-note=40).

The third aria pair occurs in Act III of *Turandot* and is sung by Liù. While the first aria, "Tanto amore segreto," is clearly a solo piece, the second is an aria combined with a pezzo concertato. In it Liù sings the aria, "Tu che di gel sei cinta," and then stabs herself and dies as the piece continues with the same melodic material for the other principals and chorus. The formal design for the entire piece is A A' B A", with the first A being the aria and the following A' B A" being the pezzo concertato. For the present discussion only the aria portion will be considered.

Like the *La Fanciulla del West* arias, Liù's arias are similar in length (about two minutes) and tempo (*lento* and *andantino mosso*, quarter-note=69), with the second a logical dramatic progression from the first. Also like Johnson's arias, neither of Liù's is separated musically from its surroundings, as both overlap with the following passages. Finally, they are part of a large-scale scene with all but one character from the opera present (*L'Imperatore Altoum*) and are addressed to the other characters, in particular to Turandot. In "Tanto amore segreto" Liù tells Turandot that by remaining silent she can show her love to the Unknown Prince (Calaf) and that all of the torture and pain she must endure is her supreme gift of love to the Prince. In F major, this aria concludes with a full cadence,
which (as already mentioned) overlaps with the following transition. As the transient passage begins, Turandot is momentarily struck by Liù's words, but then commands that the secret be torn from Liù, whereupon the executioner (Pu-Tin-Pao, mute) appears and the crowd cries for Liù to speak the Prince's name. The transient passage moves through several keys before it concludes on the dominant of Eb minor, thus preparing the way for the tonality of the second aria, "Tu che di gel sei cinta," in which Liù tells Turandot that she will sacrifice herself so that the Unknown Prince can again win. Immediately following her final words, Liù grabs a dagger and stabs herself, while the music continues into the following section.

There is a pair of adjacent trios for Tigrana, Edgar, and Frank in Act III, Scene 3, of Edgar, which function in a similar manner to the aria pairs, in that one trio progresses to the other. The trios, however, are separated by only a very brief orchestral transition rather than an extended transient passage involving voices. In fact, the two pieces could be considered to be one, though their compositional history suggests otherwise. In the first, Edgar, disguised as a Friar, and Frank discuss their plan with each other, while Tigrana appears to mourn at Edgar's coffin. During the transition, Tigrana kneels at the catafalque, while Frank indicates that he will follow Edgar's lead. As the second trio begins, Edgar and Frank approach Tigrana and attempt to entice her with jewels in hopes that she will betray the memory of Edgar. Therefore, as "Bella signora" begins, the three characters now operate within the same dramatic circle.

Like these trios, there is a pair of adjacent choruses in the first scene of Edgar's Act III that could be considered to be one very long set piece. Their dramatic content is

39 As can be seen in Nicolaisen's comparison of the three versions of Edgar, these two trios were originally, in the 1890 version, placed in two different scenes (Scenes 3 and 5). They were separated by a solo scene for Tigrana (Scene 4), which included an aria. In the 1892 version, Tigrana's aria was eliminated and the two "trio" scenes were combined into one. Also, large sections of the first trio were cut. In the 1905 version, further cuts were made in the first trio and a brief parliante passage replaced the end of the piece. In addition, the second trio was transposed upward by one-half step. (Nicolaisen, op. cit., 296.)
basically the same: mourning for Edgar. (Indeed, the ensuing aria-plus-pezzo concerto
to Fidelia and the populace continues the lengthy episode of mourning.) Yet the two
choruses are musically quite separate and self-contained.

6. Set pieces that overlap with scene changes

Seven set pieces contain internal entrances and exits; indeed, one of these even
encompasses three scenes. Therefore, these combine features of static, emotionally
reflective ensembles with some of the features of action ensembles such as the opera buffa
finales of the eighteenth century. Perhaps not surprisingly, none of these pieces is an aria.
Among these atypical pieces, the dramatic flow gives way to reflection in the most
pronounced fashion in the Act III duet in Tosca, between Tosca and Cavaradossi, during
which the lovers plan their escape and eventually lose themselves in rapturous thoughts of
living together in freedom. The firing squad enters as Tosca and Cavaradossi continue to
express their emotions enthusiastically, oblivious to the situation. A similar condition
occurs at the very end of the Gianni Schicchi duet for Lauretta and Rinuccio, who, caught
up in their love for one another, are unaware of Schicchi’s entrance.

In every instance of a set piece overlapping with a scene change, the piece falls
more prominently into one scene or the other, most often the first. Thus, in most cases, the
dramatic content of the set piece is, in effect, somehow interrupted by the entrance of
additional characters. Then, following the set piece, the next scene continues with the
added onstage characters. The tonal behavior of these pieces is not uniform. Three begin
and end in the same key despite the internal entrances or exits. The others begin and end in
different keys, and shift tonally at the moment of internal scene change.

In three cases the characters who enter remain silent throughout the remainder of the
set piece. In the Tosca duet just mentioned, the firing squad, Spoletta, and the jailer enter
but remain silent until the duet is completed. In a pezzo concerto for the miners in Act III.
of *La Fanciulla del West*, the captured Johnson is brought in, bound and on horseback, as the "chase" scene ends, and the set piece eventually winds down. In each of these cases the new scene continues after the set piece has concluded. In *Suor Angelica* the set piece has just begun, with Angelica alone on stage, when the silent Virgin and child appear for "The Miracle" scene and the stage fills with light. Most of this pezzo concertato occurs within the second of the two scenes; furthermore, the conclusion of this piece and the scene marks the conclusion of the opera as a whole.

In *Il Tabarro* a single dialogue ensemble extends over the first three scenes of the final dramatic portion of the opera. As the piece begins, Giorgetta and Luigi are alone on stage, expressing their passion for one another. Michele appears, participates in the dialogue, then exits. In the third and most extensive scene, Giorgetta and Luigi are again alone, planning their rendezvous and passionately expressing their love. Luigi then exits as the entire piece, which runs almost eight minutes, comes to its conclusion.

In the case of Schicchi/B/Sc7 and Schicchi/B/Sc8, Schicchi’s dictation of the new will, Puccini has composed one of the most structurally complex set pieces in his entire output. There are twelve named characters on stage for this scene and all participate in the ensemble, but never all together at one time. Also, the Donati relatives at times participate as a single unit, but at other times as individuals, or in small groups. Thus, each relative must be considered as a separate participant in the ensemble. The form of the entire set piece is a type of rondo: A B Trans1 A' Trans2 A" A'" (=a b a' c a") C A"" Trans3 D Trans4 E A'"" F Trans5 G A"""" Trans6 H Trans7 A"""". The scene change occurs in the middle of the section E, when Rinuccio quietly exits to the terrace to be with Lauretta, thus reducing the number of onstage characters to eleven. Thematically, these two scenes

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40Schicchi, the eight Donati relatives: Zita, Ciesca, Nella, Rinuccio, Gherardo, Marco, Simone, and Betto; the notary, Amantino di Nicolaio; and the two witnesses, Pinelino and Gucio. The only characters from the opera that are not on stage at this point are Lauretta, who is just outside on the terrace, Maestro Spineliozzo, who has come and gone earlier, and the young boy Gherardino, whose was dismissed from the room by his father as Schicchi entered.
consists of numerous motives recalled from earlier in the opera with an occasional passage of new material. The musical glue that holds the set piece together is the prominence of duple and quadruple meters and the fundamental tonality of C major, which not only begins and ends the piece, but also continually reasserts itself throughout the entire piece and not only in the A sections. Moreover, the internal secondary tonalities rarely stray very far from the central area of C major.

The remaining instance, perhaps not truly a "set piece," is a brief orchestral interlude in Act IV of La Bohème. The fourth scene of this act ends with Colline and Schaunard's exit and the fifth begins with Mimi and Rodolfo left alone on to express their love. In essence, this little interlude serves as both exit music and mood setting music. Its form is A B B', with the first two units accompanying Colline and Schaunard's exit and the final unit beginning the two lover's final scene alone together. Sections A and B are in G major and end with a half-cadence in G; B' is in C major and ends with a half-cadence in C, marked by a fermata.

7. Number of characters per scene

The number of characters in the scenes of Puccini's operas obviously varies from a single character to a very large mass of people. By considering the characteristics of the scenes in the final acts according to this variable, we improve our understanding not only of final acts per se but, in addition, of scenes for different numbers of people, no matter where they might occur in the operas.

Within the final acts of all the operas (and final sections of the one-acts), there are thirteen solo scenes, or monologues (see Table 5.6). As the term is used here, a "solo
scene" is any scene in which one principal carries the musical weight of the entire scene.

There may be offstage voices,\textsuperscript{41} onstage mute characters,\textsuperscript{42} an onstage character (or characters) who sings one or two lines,\textsuperscript{43} or any combination of these three.\textsuperscript{44}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Character(s)</th>
<th>Approximate Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc3</td>
<td>Guglielmo</td>
<td>04:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc4</td>
<td>Roberto, {Villi}\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>10:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV/Sc2</td>
<td>Manon</td>
<td>04:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc2</td>
<td>Jailer, Cavaradossi</td>
<td>05:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc5</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead)</td>
<td>01:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc7</td>
<td>Butterfly, Dolore (mute), {Pinkerton}, Pinkerton (mute), Sharpless (mute)</td>
<td>05:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc2</td>
<td>Magda</td>
<td>00:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc5</td>
<td>Michele, {2 lovers in the shadows}</td>
<td>05:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc1</td>
<td>Angelica</td>
<td>04:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc3</td>
<td>Angelica, {Angelic voices}</td>
<td>07:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc4</td>
<td>{Angelic voices}, Angelica, Virgin (mute), Child (mute)</td>
<td>02:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc11</td>
<td>Schicchi, Lauretta and Rinuccio (mute on terrace)</td>
<td>01:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc1</td>
<td>{8 Heralds}, {La Folla}, Calaf</td>
<td>06:15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Characters whose names appear in braces are heard from offstage.

Table 5.6: Solo scenes

\textsuperscript{41}Villi/II/Sc4 and Turandot/III/Sc1.
\textsuperscript{42}Schicchi/B/Sc9.
\textsuperscript{43}Tosca/III/Sc2 and Tabarro/B/Sc5.
\textsuperscript{44}Butterfly/III/Sc7 and Angelica/C/Sc4.
From the table one can see that, apart from four cases, the solo scenes are considerable in size, ranging from around four-and-one-half minutes to almost eleven minutes. Perhaps not surprisingly, each of the nine relatively long ones is centered around an aria for the character who is alone on stage. Voice types vary: while Puccini is famous for his soprano and tenor arias, this group includes two very sizable arias for the baritone voice. Several of these nine scenes contain additional pieces, such as the orchestral passage that precedes Cavaradossi’s aria, “E lucevan le stelle,” in Tosca/III/Sc2, and the prelude to Act III that precedes Calaf’s famous “Nessun dorma!” in the opening scene of Act III of Turandot. Further, Villi/II/Sc4 contains not one aria for Roberto, but two. Three of the arias encompass entire solo scenes: Guglielmo’s “No! possibil non è... Anima santa della figlia mia,” Manon’s “Sola, perduta, abbandonata,” and Angelica’s “Senza mamma.” Another three bring their respective scenes to a concluding climax: Cavaradossi’s “E lucevan le stelle,” Michele’s “Nulla! Sienzio!,” and Calaf’s “Nessun dorma.” Only in Villi/II/Sc4 (where the first of the two arias is the principal one, as discussed above) and Butterfly/III/Sc7 (the concluding passages in Madama Butterfly, discussed in Chapter 4 above), and Angelica/C/Sc3 (where a brief aria is preceded by an orchestral passage and followed by the beginning of a pezzo concertato) do the scenes continue after their respective arias.

As for the four shortest solo scenes—two of which occur at the ends of one-act operas—Angelica/C/Sc4 consists entirely of a pezzo concertato for Angelica and the offstage voices of angels, while the brief Rondine/III/Sc2 and Schicchi/B/Sc11 contain no

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46Eight of these arias have become popular as extracted items for performance outside the opera house: “No! possibil non è... Anima santa della figlia mia,” Villi/II/Sc3 (Guglielmo, baritone); “Torna ai felici di,” Villi/II/Sc4 (Roberto, tenor); “Sola, perduta abbandonata,” Manon/IV/Sc2 (Manon, soprano); “E lucevan le stelle,” Tosca/III/Sc2 (Cavaradossi, tenor); “Tu! piccolo Iddio!,” Butterfly/III/Sc7 (Butterfly, soprano); “Nulla! Sienzio!,” Tabarro/B/Sc5 (Michele, baritone); “Senza mamma,” Angelica/C/Sc1 (Angelica, soprano); and “Nessun dorma,” Turandot/III/Sc1 (Calaf, tenor).
set pieces at all. (Schicchi/B/Sc11, the title character's spoken "licenza," does incorporate the concluding seconds of a duet for the lovers on the terrace.) Tosca/III/Sc5 includes the final phrases of an orchestral piece that includes several parlante lines for Tosca.

Three of the thirteen solo scenes end with tonal closure and conclude their respective operas: Butterfly/III/Sc7, Angelica/C/Sc4, and Schicchi/B/Sc11. Of the remaining ten, five end with tonal closure but no silence, and five end without tonal closure. Of the five that end without tonal closure, only one ends with an aria (Turandot/III/Sc1). Where the end of a scene and the end of an aria coincide, there is normally tonal closure but no full stop with silence: Puccini's method of choice for ending the arias in solo scenes is to close them tonally with a solid cadence, but then hold the final tonic through as the ensuing passage begins. It is interesting that the one exceptional aria that ends with a held stop and silence, Roberto's "Torna ai felici di" (Villi/II/Sc4), does not occur at the end of the scene.

As for the articulation of beginnings, aside from Turandot/III/Sc1 (the start of the act), five of the solo scenes are preceded by tonal closure and musical silence. Three are preceded by tonal closure, but with a tonic holding through into the new scene, and four are preceded by scenes that lack tonal closure and, indeed, are linked to them by rhythmic and motivic continuity.

Finally, some remarks on staging: Two of the solo scenes end with the exit of the solo character prior to the entrance of the characters appearing in the next scene; in other words, the stage is briefly left empty. Villi/II/Sc3 ends with Guglielmo's exit, prior to Roberto's entrance for Scene 4. Rondine/III/Sc2 ends with the exit of Magda before Lisette and Prunier make their boisterous entrance. Both Guglielmo and Magda exit into

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49Villi/II/Sc3, Tosca/III/Sc2, Tabarro/B/Sc5, Angelica/C/Sc1, and Angelica/C/Sc3.
their respective abodes. As for beginnings, only one solo scene, Turandot/III/Sc1, begins an act, and its solo character, Calaf, is on stage as the curtain rises. Most of the other solo scenes also begin with their solo characters already on stage from the previous scenes; however, there are four scenes that begin with the entrance of the solo characters. Guglielmo, Roberto, and Gianni Schicchi all "walk into" their respective scenes, as does Suor Angelica for Scene 3 of her opera.

At the other end of the spectrum from solo scenes are the sixteen mass scenes that employ a group of individuals identified as a collective entity or chorus (see Table 5.7). All twelve of Puccini's operas use a chorus to some extent, except for Gianni Schicchi; nevertheless, only five of the final acts of the multi-act operas make use of an onstage group of collective individuals. These five acts as wholes either employ the chorus in a very minor way, as in Act III of Tosca, or make it a pivotal participant in the action, as in La Fanciulla del West and Turandot. As for the one-act operas, only the final dramatic section of Suor Angelica uses the chorus on stage, and it does so in a minor way. Throughout these acts the use of the chorus in individual scenes varies from pantomime with no singing, as in the opening scene of Tosca/III, to almost complete musical domination of a scene, as in Scene 1 of Edgar/III. Three final acts begin with some form of a crowd scene: Villi/II, Edgar/III, and Tosca/III; and five operas conclude with a scene involving an onstage chorus: Le Villi, Edgar, Tosca, La Fanciulla del West, and Turandot.52

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52 Suor Angelica ends with an off-stage chorus.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Approximate Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc1</td>
<td>{Female chorus}a, Anna's mourners (mute behind scrim)</td>
<td>03:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc2</td>
<td>Villi and Wills'-o-the-Wisp (mute ballet)</td>
<td>03:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc6</td>
<td>Roberto, Anna's ghost, Villi, Spiriti</td>
<td>03:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc1</td>
<td>Official (mute), Sentinels (mute), 4 Pages (mute), Children, Soldiers, Frank, Edgar, Monks, People, Fidelia, Gualtieri, 12 Priests</td>
<td>14:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc2</td>
<td>Frank, Edgar, People, Fidelia, Gualtieri, Soldiers, Monks</td>
<td>12:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc4</td>
<td>Soldiers, People, Monks, Edgar, Frank, Tigrana, Fidelia, Gualtieri</td>
<td>05:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc1</td>
<td>{Shepherd}, Sentry (mute), Jailer, Police Squad (mute), Sergeant (mute), Cavaradossi (mute)</td>
<td>06:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc4</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi, Police Squad (mute), Spoletta (mute), Official (mute), Sergeant (mute) Jailer (mute)</td>
<td>04:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc6</td>
<td>Tosca, Cavaradossi (dead), Spoletta, Sciaronne, Soldiers</td>
<td>01:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc2</td>
<td>Rance, Nick, Ashby, Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy, Miners, Billy (mute)</td>
<td>04:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc3</td>
<td>Rance, Nick, Ashby, Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy, Miners, Billy (mute), Johnson</td>
<td>07:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc4</td>
<td>Rance, Nick, Ashby, Joe, Harry, Bello, Sonora, Trin, Happy, Miners, Billy (mute), Johnson, Minnie</td>
<td>09:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc2</td>
<td>Angelica, Genovieffa, Le Suore</td>
<td>02:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc2</td>
<td>Calaf, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla, semi-nude maidens (mute), 8 Soldiers, Timur (mute), Liù (mute)</td>
<td>03:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc3</td>
<td>Calaf, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla, Soldiers, Timur, Liù, Turandot, Executioner (mute)</td>
<td>14:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc5</td>
<td>Turandot, Calaf (mute), Altoum (mute), Court, Dignitaries, Wise Men, Soldiers, Ping, Pong, Pang, La Folla</td>
<td>03:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aCharacters whose names appear in braces are heard from offstage.

Table 5.7: Scenes including collective characters
There are four scenes in which the collective individuals appear on stage but do not sing. The first two are both from Act II of *Le Villi* and are the only cases in which a collective group appears alone on stage without at least two principal characters. Prior to the opening of the curtain for Scene 1, an offstage women's chorus can be heard during the orchestral prelude ("L'Abbandono"), but when the scene is lit from behind a scrim, the audience sees only Anna's mourners silently crossing the stage. After the mourners exit, the offstage chorus can again be heard as the prelude to the act concludes. In Scene 2, a second silent group, the Villi and Wills-o'-the-Wisp, appears. In this case, the collective group is represented not by the chorus but by the *corps de ballet*, who silently dance their witches' dance in "La Tregenda." The other two scenes involving a silent group are both in Act III of *Tosca*. In Scene 1 the police squad (soldiers) brings on Cavaradossi and then exits in silence. In Scene 4 the firing squad (again soldiers) enters, shoots Cavaradossi, and silently exits. As these same soldiers do appear and participate vocally in the final scene of the opera, it is clear that they are represented by a chorus, not by mere supernumeraries.

The remaining twelve crowd scenes are choral. In one (*Tosca/III/Sc6*) there is no set piece of any type, though the chorus does participate vocally. In each of the others, there is at least one set piece in which the chorus participates. As mentioned above, the chorus dominants *Edgar/III/Sc1*. This is the longest scene in any of the final acts, and its three set pieces (two choruses and an aria combined with pezzo concertato) all employ the chorus of children, soldiers, monks, priests, and the general populace. The chorus also dominates *Villi/II/Sc6*, *Fanciulla/III/Sc2* and *Fanciulla/III/Sc4*, and *Turandot/III/Sc5*.

Six of the crowd scenes include at least one aria or aria-like piece; and furthermore, all but one of these pieces is addressed to or at least heard by all of the onstage characters, including the chorus. In *Edgar/III/Sc1* Fidelia sings of her love for Edgar in the aria with pezzo concertato "Addio mio dolce amor," while the chorus proclaims that his memory will
live forever. In the following scene, Scene 2, Fidelia addresses the entire crowd in her defense of Edgar, in "D'ogni dolor... Nel villaggio d'Edgar." In Fanciulla/III/Sc3 Johnson addresses both of his arias, "Risparmiate lo scherno" and "Ch'ella mi creda libero," to all of the men on stage; Minnie does the same in her aria, "Quando, perduta fra bestemmie e risse," in the following scene. In Turandot/III/Sc3 Liù addresses both "Tanto amore segreto" and the aria portion of the aria with pezzo concertato "Tu che di gel sei cinta" directly to Turandot and the masses. Only in Tosca/III/Sc4 is there an aria-like piece, an orchestral piece with prominent parlante vocal lines, that is not addressed to or heard by the onstage chorus. In this case, Tosca addresses her words to the body of Cavaradossi, as the firing squad is exiting.

Most often, in twelve of the sixteen cases, Puccini concludes a mass scene in a tonally closed manner followed by musical silence. When not the final scene of an opera, all but one of these tonally closed crowd scenes end with the exit of the collective group. The single exception is the end of Edgar/III/Sc1, which in its progression to Scene 2 is an anomaly in Puccini's final acts: from Scene 1 to Scene 2, there is no change of onstage singing personages; only the mute characters exit. On the other hand, the scene change is marked by a change in dramatic purpose. Scene 1 encompasses Edgar's funeral procession and Fidelia's mourning for her lost love. This is a complete dramatic and musical unit, followed a complete musical stop with silence, at which time the official, sentinels, and pages exit. Scene 2 begins with Frank's funeral oration and progresses through "Il Frate's" provoking of the crowd concerning Edgar's questionable past, Fidelia's defense of Edgar, and the exit of all but Edgar ("Il Frate") and Frank, again marked by tonal closure followed by musical silence.

Only one of the four crowd scenes that do not end with tonal closure involves the exit of the chorus: Tosca/III/Sc4. In this case, the firing squad exits after shooting Cavaradossi and Tosca discovers that her lover is dead. In the other three cases without
tonal closure, an additional character makes an entrance into the crowd scene. Fanciulla/III/Sc2 ends in the middle of a set piece as Johnson enters, bound, on horseback. The subsequent scene, Fanciulla/III/Sc3, also comes to an abrupt end as Minnie's voice is heard from offstage and she comes riding onto the stage, on horseback, waving her revolver. Turandot/III/Sc2 ends as the chorus calls for the entrance of Turandot, whereupon she makes her entrance.

Ranking between the solo scenes and the crowd scenes are ensembles for two or more principal characters. There are twenty scenes for two characters; as in the case of the solo scenes, some include offstage voices, onstage mute characters, an additional character who utters a line or two, or any combination of these. Three duo scenes lack any type of set piece; and only six include a duet. Of these six scenes with duet, only three are centered around that piece.53

Three duo scenes include at least one aria, and in each case the additional onstage character hears the words. In Tosca/III/Sc3, Tosca addresses "Il tuo sangue" to Cavaradossi, who then, in turn, addresses "O dolci mani" to Tosca. Then the two lovers join together in a lengthy duet. In Butterfly/III/Sc3, Sharpless directly addresses his brief "Vel dissi? Vi ricorda?" to Pinkerton. Emotionally crushed, Pinkerton then pours out his remorse in "Addio fiorito asil" and quickly exits. Turandot addresses "Del primo pianto" (not composed by Puccini) to Calaf in Turandot/III/Sc5.

Five of the duo scenes begin the last acts of multi-act operas, and one begins the opening scene of the final dramatic section of Il Tabarro. Three duo scenes conclude their respective operas. Fourteen end with tonal closure, and eight of these are followed by

53Villi/II/Sc5 for Roberto and Anna, Bohème/IV/Sc1 for Rodolfo and Marcello, and Schicchi/B/Sc8 for Rinuccio and Lauretta.
silence. Of the five non-terminal duo scenes that end with tonal closure followed by musical silence, three are followed by the entrance of additional characters, while two conclude with the exit of one of the two onstage principals.

Six scenes in the concluding acts are for three principals. Three do not incorporate a set piece, and two include trios. As already mentioned, Edgar/III/Sc3 has two trios for Tigrana, Edgar, and Frank; and Butterfly/III/Sc2 includes one for Suzuki, Pinkerton, and Sharpless. All of the trio scenes are internal and are in some way linked to their succeeding scene. Of the three scenes that have four principal characters, two are from La Bohème and the other is from Madama Butterfly. There is only one scene in Puccini’s finales that is for five principals: Bohème/IV/7, for Mimi, Rodolfo, Marcello, Musetta, and Schaunard. Both of the scenes for six principals are also from La Bohème. There are nine scenes with eight or more named characters, and they are all from Gianni Schicchi. Of all of the scenes incorporating four or more principals, only one concludes an opera, Bohème/IV/Sc8.

Most of the ensemble scenes for three or more principals are in some way tonally connected to the succeeding scenes, and the set pieces employed in them are diverse. Five scenes contain no set piece at all, while four include an aria or an orchestral passage that includes prominent parlante singing for one voice. In a manner quite different from the norm, Colline’s reflective aria, “Vecchia zimarra senti,” is addressed to his coat rather than to any of the other three characters onstage in Bohème/IV/Sc4. In Scene 7 of La Bohème, however, all of the Bohemians present listen to Mimi’s final utterances, beginning “Oh! come è bello e morbido,” which are sung in parlante style over a lengthy orchestral passage. In Schicchi/B/Sc3 Schicchi addresses his “Si corre dal notaio... In testa la

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54 This piece, beginning with Sharpless’ text, “Io son che alle sue pene...”, is perhaps the most famous of Puccini’s few trios.
cappellina," in which he initiates and explains his plan for improvising Donati's will, to all of the relatives. Finally, in Schicchi/B/Sc6, Schicchi sings "Addio, Firenze" to the relatives, who then repeat it back to the rogue.

8. Keys of scenes and degrees of tonal closure at ends of scenes

Of the seventy-three scenes in the final acts and sections of Puccini's operas, forty-five, or almost 62%, end with tonal closure, while twenty-eight, or roughly 38%, do not do so. (See Table 5.8; in this table and the one that follows, a question mark indicates tonal ambiguity of one sort or another.) Of the forty-five tonally closed scenes, twenty-eight (62%) end with some degree of musical silence after the cadence. It must be remembered, however, that this relatively high number includes the twelve final scenes of the operas, which are inherently tonally closed and followed by silence.
**SCENES THAT END WITH TONAL CLOSURE**

**Cadence is followed by silence (*final scene*)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Beginning &amp; ending tonalities</th>
<th>Final Cadence or Chord tonalities</th>
<th>Progression from beginning to ending tonalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc1</td>
<td>F - F</td>
<td>V^{7}.1</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc2</td>
<td>g - g</td>
<td>ii^7-i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc5</td>
<td>e - Eb</td>
<td>V^{7}.I</td>
<td>d m2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Villi/II/Sc6</td>
<td>? - g</td>
<td>ii^7-i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc1</td>
<td>b^{b} - B^{b}</td>
<td>V-I</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc2</td>
<td>B^{b} - E^{b}</td>
<td>V^{7}.I</td>
<td>d P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Edgar/III/Sc4</td>
<td>? - b</td>
<td>V-ii^{4}.2-i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Manon/IV/Sc3</td>
<td>f - f^{#}</td>
<td>III^{4}.2-i-plus extension</td>
<td>u m2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Bohème/IV/Sc8</td>
<td>A - c^{#}</td>
<td>V^{7}.i-plus extension</td>
<td>u M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc1</td>
<td>E (E^{#} Dorian) - e</td>
<td>V^{7}.i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc3</td>
<td>B - B</td>
<td>ii^{4}.2-i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Tosca/III/Sc6</td>
<td>? - e^{b}</td>
<td>ii^{4}.2-i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc5</td>
<td>? - f^{?}</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Butterfly/III/Sc7</td>
<td>b - b</td>
<td>V pitch-i pitch; VI over i pedal</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc1</td>
<td>D? - C^{b}</td>
<td>I^{maj}7</td>
<td>d A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Fanciulla/III/Sc4</td>
<td>c^{#} - E</td>
<td>ii^{6}.9-i</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc3</td>
<td>? - C</td>
<td>V^{7}.i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc6</td>
<td>E - G</td>
<td>V-I</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc7</td>
<td>G - D</td>
<td>I-I</td>
<td>u P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Rondine/III/Sc8</td>
<td>F - D^{b}</td>
<td>v-i5-iv^{4}.2-iv^{6}.4-ii-V-I</td>
<td>d M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc3</td>
<td>c^{#} - c^{#}</td>
<td>V^{7}.i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc4</td>
<td>c^{#} - E^{b}</td>
<td>IV-I</td>
<td>u d3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Tabarro/B/Sc7</td>
<td>c - c</td>
<td>V^{7}.i-plus extension</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc2</td>
<td>A - C</td>
<td>V^{7}.I</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Angelica/C/Sc4</td>
<td>C - C</td>
<td>iv^{4}-v^{9}....-I</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Schicchi/B/Sc1i</td>
<td>G^{b} - G^{b}</td>
<td>V^{7}.I</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc3</td>
<td>G^{b} - e^{b}</td>
<td>V-I</td>
<td>d M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Turandot/III/Sc5a</td>
<td>C^{#} (over b pedal) - D</td>
<td>IV-I</td>
<td>u m2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued on next page

Table 5.8: Keys and musical endings of scenes

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Table 5.8 (continued)

**Cadential sound continues into next scene**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Next Chord</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV/Sc2</td>
<td>f - f</td>
<td>iv-i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc6</td>
<td>? - b(^b)</td>
<td>v-i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc1</td>
<td>B(^b) - E</td>
<td>iv(^6)(^4) - ii(^#7), bVII(^9) - I</td>
<td>d d5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc4</td>
<td>F - F</td>
<td>V(^7) (over tonic pedal) - I</td>
<td>d M2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rondine/III/Sc5</td>
<td>F - E</td>
<td>V-I</td>
<td>d m2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc2</td>
<td>c(^#) - c(^#)</td>
<td>V(^7)-i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc5</td>
<td>a - c</td>
<td>V-i</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc1</td>
<td>a - a</td>
<td>bVII-i</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc2</td>
<td>D - D</td>
<td>V(^4)(^3) - I</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc8</td>
<td>C - C</td>
<td>V(^7)-I</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rhythmic motion overlaps with cadence and continues into next scene**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Next Chord</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc3</td>
<td>c - E(^b)</td>
<td>V(^7)-I</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc1</td>
<td>C - A</td>
<td>V(^7)-I</td>
<td>d m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc2</td>
<td>e - b</td>
<td>V(^7)-i</td>
<td>u P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc1</td>
<td>E(^b) - G</td>
<td>V(^7)-I</td>
<td>u m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc2</td>
<td>G - G(^b)</td>
<td>V(^7)-I</td>
<td>d m2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc2</td>
<td>? (A wh-tn) - A?</td>
<td>chord on A; function unclear</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc4(^a)</td>
<td>a - E</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>u P5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCENES THAT END TONALLY OPEN**

**Half-cadence or caesura followed by silence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Next Chord</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc2</td>
<td>A - A(^b)</td>
<td>V/(^V)</td>
<td>d m2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc3</td>
<td>e - d(^b)/c(^#)</td>
<td>V(^7)</td>
<td>d m3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc6</td>
<td>D - C</td>
<td>V(^7)</td>
<td>d M2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Half-cadence or caesura, but sound continues into next scene**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Next Chord</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villi/II/Sc4</td>
<td>e(^b) - ?</td>
<td>pitch (b)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar/III/Sc3</td>
<td>? - c(^?)</td>
<td>pitch (g)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc5</td>
<td>C - E</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>u M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc6</td>
<td>E - E</td>
<td>V(^4)(^3)/V</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc1</td>
<td>c(^#) - c(^#)</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued on next page
Table 5.8 (continued)

**Rhythmic motion overlaps with half-cadence or caesura and continues into next section**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Harmony</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manon/IV/Sc1</td>
<td>f# - d?</td>
<td>ii-iv-i</td>
<td>d M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc4</td>
<td>c# - G</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>u d5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohème/IV/Sc7</td>
<td>E - A</td>
<td>ii6/4</td>
<td>d P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc4</td>
<td>E (F# Dorian) - a</td>
<td>bV</td>
<td>d P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosca/III/Sc5</td>
<td>a - ?</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc3</td>
<td>a? - ?</td>
<td>f#67 over g pedal</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfly/III/Sc4</td>
<td>? - e?</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanciulla/III/Sc3</td>
<td>(A wh-tm) - c#</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>u M3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabarro/B/Sc6</td>
<td>c - c</td>
<td>i6/4</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica/C/Sc3</td>
<td>F - C</td>
<td>IV over dominant pedal</td>
<td>u P5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc1</td>
<td>c - D</td>
<td>V pitch</td>
<td>u M2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc3</td>
<td>D - ?</td>
<td>c#</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc4</td>
<td>D - Ab?</td>
<td>leading tone</td>
<td>u d5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc5</td>
<td>F#/f# - F#/f#</td>
<td>v6/4</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc7</td>
<td>C - C</td>
<td>ii6/5</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc9</td>
<td>C - Gb</td>
<td>V7</td>
<td>u d5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schicchi/B/Sc10</td>
<td>Gb - Gb</td>
<td>V9</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc1</td>
<td>d? - D</td>
<td>V7</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turandot/III/Sc2</td>
<td>D - Gb</td>
<td>V9</td>
<td>d A5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Alfano ending.
In general, all of the final acts contain at least one scene that does not end with tonal closure. The final dramatic section of *Gianni Schicchi* is unique in this category in that not only does it contain the largest number of tonally open-ended scenes (eight) but seven of them are rhythmically continuous, with no slowing of the pace to allow for entrances or exits. Certainly this idiosyncrasy has to do again with the fast-paced comedic nature of *Gianni Schicchi*. Still, every final act, except for that of *Edgar*, does contain at least one scene that overlaps rhythmically with the next scene, whether it ends with tonal closure or not.

At the other end of the spectrum, with the exception of Act IV of *La Bohème*,55 all of the final acts contain at least one tonally closed internal scene ending in which the rhythmic motion stops for an entrance or exit. While neither the fourth act of *Manon Lescaut* 56 nor the final dramatic section of *Gianni Schicchi* contains such a scene ending involving actual musical silence, both do have at least one tonally closed scene ending in which motion is suspended and a cadential pitch or chord is held, linking two scenes while characters enter or exit. Of the eleven scenes in the final dramatic section of *Gianni Schicchi*, only the final scene, "Spinelloccio" scene (Scene 2), and the end of the "Notary" scene (Scene 8) end with tonal closure; the last two of these scene endings both fit the description just given.

The most unusual final act from this point of view is Act IV of *La Bohème*. Of the seven internal scene endings in this act, only Scene 1 is tonally closed, and it overlaps rhythmically with the following scene. While the remaining six scenes do not end with tonal closure, four of them do come to a rhythmic stop, with two of these having a half-cadence followed by complete silence. Scene 2 ends with a V/V in A♭ major, and Scene 3

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55 See discussion of "final acts with large-scale formal design based on scene structure," above.
ends with a $V^7$ in the enharmonic key of $D^b/C#$ minor. In essence, the entire fourth act of 
*La Bohème* is constructed to avoid musical respite at scene endings until the conclusion of 
the opera.

It will be noticed in Table 5.9 that close to one-third of the scenes in the concluding 
acts of the multi-act operas and the finales of the one-acts begin and end with the same 
tonic. The only two concluding acts that do not contain any scenes that begin and end with 
the same tonic are Fanciulla/III and Turandot/III. (In consulting this table, one should keep 
in mind that the scenes vary greatly in length.)

---

57 While the discussion here is focused on the tonal behavior of scenes, Table 5.9 also shows, at the far left 
and far right of each line, the keys in which each final act (or final dramatic division of a one-act) begins and 
ends. Only Manon/IV, the shortest of the final acts with its outer duo scenes framing the central solo 
scene, begins and ends in the same key. Villi/II might be thought to do so: as explained above, its first 
scene, behind a scrim, functions as an entr’acte; the “finale proper” is framed by the two instances of the 
ballet of the Villi, both in G minor. As for the other finales, one might speculate that the relationship of 
outer keys has dramatic significance: for instance, in Fanciulla/III the upward progression from the whole-
tone tonic area of D to the bright concluding tonality of E major might reflect Minnie’s hope of redemptive 
love as she begins a new life with Johnson. Testing such speculation would involve tracing the tonal and 
dramatic progression of each act to find meaningful internal relationships that support the apparent 
significance of the outer pairing. Greenwald has proposed a methodology for such an investigation in 
"Dramatic Exposition and Musical Structure in Puccini's Operas" (Ph.D. dissertation, City University of 
New York, 1991; Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 9119633, 1992), Chapter 3. On this topic it 
might also be mentioned that Puccini does not begin and end entire operas in the same key.
![Image 91x77 to 535x717](image)

Table 5.9: Beginning and ending tonalities of individual scenes

Interestingly enough, two episodes that share initial and closing pitches in the bass are not tonally closed. While Rondine/III/Sc2 is centered around the pitch E, that note never assumes a true tonic function in either major or minor mode, and the scene ends with several repetitions of an E\(^{13}\) chord. (The dramatic purpose of this brief scene is transitional; it involves getting Magda offstage quickly and in as dramatically plausible a manner as possible before Lisette and Prunier make their sudden entrance that temporarily changes the mood of the act.) In the case of Schicchi/B/Sc5, the tonic note of F\(^{#}\) is ever present,\(^{58}\) but neither major nor minor mode is ever established. The episode ends with a v\(^{9}\)A\(^{3}\) chord, but the low tonic pedal is still audible. Like the scene from La Rondine, this

\(^{58}\)Note the low-pitched bell that rings throughout the scene.
episode is relatively brief in duration, running less than one minute and dramatically transitional. The swift pace of Schicchi's cunning plan is momentarily interrupted and suspended as a funeral knell is heard from outside. Gherardo quickly exits to investigate the announcement, Lauretta enters from the terrace and Schicchi promptly sends her back, Gherardo returns and announces the death of the "captain's baptized moor," and the relatives respond with "Requiescat in pace!" The next episode then proceeds after a momentary musical silence, as the relatives re-initiate Schicchi's scheme.

Finally, it should be noted that four of the operas, *Madama Butterfly*, *Il Tabarro*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Gianni Schicchi*, each have a final scene that begins and ends with the same tonal center. Interestingly enough, each of the one-act operas in *Il Trittico* concludes with such a tonally stable scene. Of the multi-act operas, only *Madama Butterfly* concludes with a scene whose beginning and end share the same tonic.

Puccini tends to link adjacent scenes tonally. As can be seen above in Table 5.9, more than half of the sixty-one scene changes involve beginning a scene in the key in which the preceding scene ended. Distantly following the unison are five instances of scenes whose tonalities move downward a perfect fifth. Of all the other possible intervals, only the movement upward a minor second and a minor third, and downward a diminished fifth have two instances each.

9. Summary

In the final act of each of Puccini's multi-act operas, and the final dramatic sections of each of his one-acts, there are from three to eleven "scenes"—i.e., portions marked by the entrances and exits of characters. (The convention of labeling libretti in this fashion ended early in Puccini's career.) They range in duration from less than a minute to almost fifteen minutes, with the majority falling between three and eight minutes. Nine of the
eleven scenes running longer than eight minutes end with tonal closure, and seven of these are followed by musical silence. Of the eighteen scenes running less than two minutes in duration, all but eight are from *Il Trittico*, and only half end with tonal closure.

Roughly two-thirds of all the scenes in the final acts and final dramatic sections end with tonal closure, with more than 60% of these being followed by some degree of musical silence. Roughly two-thirds of the twenty-eight scenes that do not end with tonal closure are linked to the following scenes by continuous rhythmic motion without any pause. Almost one-third of the scenes begin and end in the same tonality. Otherwise, the most common progression from the beginning of a scene to its end is the movement, either upward or downward, of a third, most often the upward movement of a minor third. Furthermore, the movement upward by a minor third from the beginning of a scene to its conclusion is the only progression for which all instances conclude with tonal closure. The unison is by far the most frequent interval between the key at the end of a scene and the key at the beginning of the next scene.

The number of set pieces per scene varies from zero to five, with almost half the scenes being built around a single set piece. There are six scenes that contain adjacent set pieces of the same type for the same character or characters; usually the two pieces have similar tempos but are disproportionate in weight, and the more prominent of the two is the better known as an independent excerpt.

Seven set pieces contain internal entrances or exits. Most of these pieces belong to the first of two scenes, with the second scene representing a dramatic interruption. One of these pieces, the opening dialogue ensemble of the final dramatic section of *Il Tabarro*, encompasses three scenes.

The number of characters per scene varies greatly. Thirteen of the scenes feature a single character and most often include a dramatically reflective aria. Although eleven of the twelve Puccini operas employ some type of chorus, only five of the multi-act operas
include a chorus in the final act, and only one of the one-acts includes a chorus its final dramatic section. The choral involvement in these acts ranges from minor to dominating.

Most importantly, five final acts appear to have some type of large-scale plan based on the changing number of characters on stage. The final acts of *Edgar, Manon Lescaut, La Bohème*, and *La Rondine* all exhibit some type of arch form created by the various entrances and exits of principals; the final act of *La Fanciulla del West*, on the other hand, begins with only two characters on stage and progressively adds more to each scene. In some of these cases the length of scenes complements the pattern.

While this chapter has focused to a large extent on statistics, what is interesting here is the variety of ways that Puccini structured scenes of different types and related scenes to each other, to control pacing, to dramatize particular moments, and so on, during the final acts.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, Puccini is the most performed of all opera composers, including Verdi, Mozart, and Wagner,\(^1\) and perhaps one of the major factors in his success, among others, has been the riveting final moments of his operas. By concentrating on the finales of Puccini’s operas and studying them with regard to basic elements of dramatic and musical structure, I hope to have shown that Puccini used these to control dramatic climax within each opera without becoming formulaic. While Greenwald states that "Puccini apparently poured the better part of his creative energy into his expositions,"\(^2\) I hope to have demonstrated here that his energy and attention to musical and dramatic detail did not wane in his finales, but were, in fact, focused toward achieving the most musically and dramatically effective conclusions possible. Indeed, Puccini was able to create some of the most powerful operatic finales in the genre.

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\(^1\)The *Opera America* surveys, which cover professional opera productions in North America during eleven of the thirteen latest seasons up to 1994, show the ten operas performed by the largest number of companies. Tally of the topmost five for each year show, when added together, 407 independent productions of Puccini operas. Verdi is a distant second with 197, followed by Mozart with 185. (Tallied from information supplied by *Opera America*, 1156 15th Street, NW, Suite 810, Washington, DC 20005-1704.) Three of the six most frequently performed operas throughout the history of the Metropolitan Opera Company (New York City) up through the 1996-97 season are by Puccini: *La Bohème* (1124 perf.), *Aida* (1016 perf.), *Carmen* (935 perf.), *La Traviata* (903 perf.), *Madama Butterfly* (806 perf.), and *Tosca* (782 perf.). Furthermore, not a season has gone by without a Puccini opera in the repertory of the Metropolitan since the premiere of his first opera there, during the 1900-01 season (*La Bohème*). This cannot be said for any other composer, including Verdi.

As I noted at the outset, Puccini's concern with finales can be clearly seen in his "obsession" with final curtains, his detailed stage directions for the final moments of the operas, and the fact that throughout his career he continued to revise his operas, most often the final acts, in order to direct the musical and dramatic flow toward the climax of the opera. We have seen Puccini employing long-range planning across these concluding acts and sections, similar to that found across entire operas; this planning is evident in a high degree of musical and dramatic organization. Especially important here are Puccini's use of recalled thematic motives throughout the final acts, and particularly at their conclusions, to remind the listener of past events in the operas or to evoke strong emotional ties to previously handled dramatic issues, and his organization of several finales according to changing numbers of characters on stage. His attention to musical and visual detail certainly makes the finales of his operas effective communicators of the overall dramatic substance of their plots.

To summarize the findings of the present study, several general characteristics of the final acts of Puccini's multi-act operas, as well as the final major dramatic divisions of his one-act operas, may be noted. While Puccini used a great variety of temporal and geographic settings throughout his operas, including "exotic" times and places, like other Italian composers of his era he favored stories set in nineteenth-century Europe. He generally took great care to indicate settings in the scores, as well as occasionally indicating them via the music itself; this might involve evoking the particular sounds of real places as well as suggesting the aural atmosphere of imaginary ones. Finales are almost always set in a single locale, often emphasizing outdoor settings near the homes of principal characters.

All of Puccini's final acts begin with some type of instrumental "prelude" that accompanies pantomime; offstage voices play an important role in some operas. Most finales begin with one or two major principals on stage, and when there is only one, that
character sings some type of reflective aria. When there are two characters on stage, they
engage in a dialogue ensemble rather than a duet. While Puccini preferred to begin and end
his operas with tonal clarity, he often experimented with tonal ambiguity at the beginnings
of the final acts of the multi-act operas. A key change dramatizes the passage of time
between the penultimate and final acts. Mode at the beginning of the finales seems
associated with time of day, major with daytime and minor with evening.

In the final moments of his operas, Puccini wants to sustain the dramatic action
until the very last moment of music, and he uses the final curtain to achieve this effect.
Generally, the final curtains descend either quickly on shocking scenes of death (invariably
set in minor keys) or slowly on sentimental scenes of various types. Sentimental endings
are particularly likely to employ offstage voices. Most of the operas end with a corpse
somewhere in full view of the audience. When the body is male, the death has occurred
quickly via some outside force; when it is female (most often the case), the cause of death
is more varied and the death tends to be more lingering in nature. The most important
dramatic feature of Puccini's conclusions is his use of specific pantomimed stage action for
all characters on stage. The final music might be a set piece, often a reprise of one heard
earlier, in which case singing dominates until the last moments of the score, or a transient
passage—invariably emphasizing recalled thematic motives—in which case the opera ends
with an instrumental coda.

The only Puccini libretti with designated scene divisions (defined by entrances and
exits) are those for Le Villi and the first version and first major revision of Edgar (1890 and
1892). From Manon Lescaut (1893) onward, the libretti follow modern convention and do
not designate entrances and exits, yet Puccini is still clearly interested in entrances and exits
of characters as dramatic moments. Some finales even have large-scale forms based on
patterns of entrances and exits. There is a great variety in the duration of individual scenes
(defined in this fashion) within the final acts and final dramatic sections of Puccini's
operas. Almost half of the scenes in the finales are built around single set pieces. Roughly two-thirds of all the scenes in the finales end with tonal closure, and most of these are followed by musical silence. Almost one-third of the scenes in the finales begin and end in the same key.

Of course, this study does not pretend to have exhausted the topic of Puccini's compositional practices in his finales. While the composer's skill at orchestration is occasionally mentioned throughout this document, and it has been the primary focus of studies by other scholars, I have not attempted to integrate a systematic analysis of orchestration into this study. Similarly, my study of Puccini's reminiscence motives has concentrated almost exclusively on their usage in the final moments of the act, whereas they are important throughout. The issue of the rhythmic flow of the finales also needs further study. Without doubt, the most important topic requiring further study is Puccini's use of tonality in the final acts. While I have considered local use of keys and modes, and outlined the boundary keys of scenes throughout each finale, I have not attempted to integrate consideration of characterization, scenes, set pieces, and so on into a study of long-range tonal planning across entire acts.

Nearly all of these topics beg the question of the central acts: we now have a study of the "expositions" of the operas (Greenwald's) and a study of the finales, but we need to understand how Puccini used the internal acts of his operas to propel the drama from its outset to its eventual climax and denouement. At the same time, it should be noted that the present study can be viewed as another approach to the study of the initial acts, as well as a vehicle for the study of the uncharted central acts.

Nearly every style and genre in Puccini’s output—whether vocal set piece or instrumental piece; transient passage of recitative, parlante, and arioso; or scene of one or another type—is represented in the final acts of his multi-act operas and the final major dramatic sections of his one-act operas. All of these components are used in a variety of ways; in fact, they are handled differently in every opera. One need only compare the stylistic features found in Puccini’s "sentimental" operas (Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, Madama Butterfly, La Fanciulla del West, La Rondine, and Suor Angelica) with those in his more "shocking" works (Le Villi, Edgar, Tosca, and Il Tabarro): on the other hand, Puccini uses the same methods to achieve these diametrically opposed effects; on the other, individual works within each group often display quite different compositional approaches. Note the same graphic display of horror in the endings of the veristic Tosca and the sentimental Madama Butterfly. Note the different approaches to the finales of the very similar and equally sentimental La Bohème and La Rondine. The former concludes musically with short reminiscences of motives heard throughout the score and dramatically with the heroine merely going to sleep, leaving the Bohemians to discover her death and then individually to react to it. The latter, on the other hand, ends with an elaborate and lengthy duo scene that consists of a very long set piece based almost completely on newly composed material; no one dies and the hero is simply left alone on stage weeping. Even the generic content of the final moments of the operas varies widely, from a set piece to a transient passage, from a final vocal utterance to an instrumental coda, from a reminiscence motive to newly composed material. In short, if there is one principal conclusion to be drawn from this dissertation, it is that Puccini used his various dramatic and musical effects and compositional methods in a great variety of ways in his finales, always controlling pacing and driving effectively to a climax and denouement without ever becoming stilted and formulaic.
APPENDIX

RECORDINGS USED FOR MUSICAL ANALYSIS

Le Villi
CBS Records Masterworks MK 76890
Henry Wood Hall, London, June 1979
Conductor Lorin Maazel
Anna Renata Scotto
Roberto Placido Domingo
Guglielmo Leo Nucci
Il Narratore Tito Gobbi
Ambrosian Opera Chorus
(John McCarthy)
National Philharmonic Orchestra
Italian Language Supervisor Ubaldo Gardini
Producer Paul Myers
Recording Engineers Robert Auger & Mike Ross-Trevor
Production Coordinator Vivienne H. Taylor

Edgar
CBS Records Masterworks M2K 79213
Carnegie Hall, New York, 1977
Conductor Eve Queler
Fidelta Renata Scotto
Tigrana Gwendolyn Killebrew
Edgar Carlo Bergonzi
Frank Vicente Sardinero
Gualtiero Mark Munkittrick
Schola Cantorum of New York
(Hugh Ross)
New York City Opera Children's Chorus
(Mildred Hohner)
Opera Orchestra of New York
Producers Steven Epstein & Paul Myers
Recording Engineers Stanley Tonkel, Milton Cherin, & Mike Ross-Taylor
Manon Lescaut
Deutsche Grammophon 413 893-2
London, 1983
Conductor
Manon
Renato Des Grieux
Lescaut
Geronte di Ravoir
Edmondo
Un Musico (voce sola)
L'Oste
Il Maestro di Ballo
Sergente degli Arcieri
Un Lampionajo
Un Comandante di Marina
Un Sergente
Coro (Madrigale)

Giuseppe Sinopoli
Mirella Freni
Placido Domingo
Renato Bruson
Kurt Rydl
Robert Gambill
Brigitte Fassbaender
George Macpherson
John Fryatt
Handel Thomas
Mark Curtis
John Tomlinson
Paschal Allen
Elizabeth Stanford
Iris Saunders
Elizabeth Sikora
Jean Tredaway

Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
(Nina Walker)
Philharmonia Orchestra
Musical Assistant
Producer
Production Coordinator
Recording Supervisor
Recording Engineer

Paul Wynne Griffiths
Günther Breest
Claudia Hamann
Wolfgang Stengel
Klaus Hiemann

La Bohème
Erato ECD 75450
Conductor
Mimi
Rodolfo
Marcello
Musetta
Schaunard
Colline
Benoît
Aicindoro
Parpignol
Chœurs de Radio France
(Michel Tranchant)
Maitrise de Radio France
(Michel Lassère de Rozel)
Orchestre National de France
Singing Coach
Musical Assistant
Producer

James Conlon
Barbara Hendricks
José Carreras
Gino Quilico
Angela Maria Blasi
Richard Cowen
Francesco Ellero d'Artegna
Federico Davia
Federico Davia
Michel Senechal
Leore Magiera
Daniel Zalay
Daniel Toscan du Plantier
Recording Supervisor: Michel Glotz
Artistic Co-ordinator: Martin Engstroem
Recording Engineer: Alain Duchemin
R-E Assistants: Jean-Michel Berrot & Daniel Zalay

**Tosca**

Sony Classical S2K 45847
Italian Institute, Budapest, December 14-22, 1988
Conductor: Michael Tilson Thomas
Floria Tosca: Éva Marton
Mario Cavaradossi: José Carreras
Scarpia: Juan Pons
Cesare Angelotti: István Gáti
Spoletta: Ferenc Gerdesits
Sagrestaro: Italo Tajo
Sciarrone: József Németh
Pastore: Benedek Héja
Carceriere: József Gregor
Hungarian State Radio & Television Chorus
(Ferenc Sapszono, Paul Griffiths)
Hungarian State Orchestra
Producers: David Mottley & Jenő Simon
Recording Engineer: Michael Gray

**Madama Butterfly**

Deutsche Grammophon 423 567-2
Watford Town Hall, London, April 1987
Conductor: Giuseppe Sinopoli
Madama Butterfly: Mirella Freni
B. F. Pinkerton: José Carreras
Suzuki: Teresa Berganza
Sharpless: Juan Pons
Goro: Anthony Laciura
Il Bonzo: Kurt Rydl
Kate Pinkerton: Marianne Rørholm
Il Principe Yamadori: Mark Curtis
Il Commissario Imperiale: Hidenori Komatsu
Lo Zio Yakudisé: Petten Salomaa
L’Ufficiale del Registro: Hidenori Komatsu
La Madre di Cio-Cio-San: Hitomi Katagiri
La Zia di Cio-Cio-San: Judith Howarth
La Cugina di Cio-Cio-San: Noriko Sasaki
Ambrosian Opera Chorus
(John McCarthy)
Philharmonia Orchestra
Musical assistant: Guido Guida
**Producer**  Günther Breest  
**Recording Coordinator**  Claudia Harmann  
**Recording Supervisor**  Wolfgang Stengel  
**Recording Engineer**  Klaus Hiemann

### La Fanciulla del West

RCA Victor Red Seal, BMG Classics 09026-60597-2  
Studio 1 of the Bavarian Radio, Munich, June 16-28, 1991  

- **Conductor**: Leonard Slatkin  
- **Minnie**: Eva Marton  
- **Jack Rance**: Alain Fondary  
- **Dick Johnson (Ramerrez)**: Dennis O'Neil  
- **Ashby**: Jan-Hendrik Rootering  
- **Sonora**: Jean-Marc Ivaldi  
- **Trin**: Robert Swensen  
- **Sid**: Danilo Serraiocco  
- **Bello**: Martin Cooke  
- **Harry**: Jan Vacík  
- **Joe**: Heinrich Weber  
- **Happy**: Ludwig Baumann  
- **Larkens**: Rainer Scholze  
- **Billy Jackrabbit**: Franz Hawlata  
- **Wowkle**: Cornelia Wulkopf  
- **Jake Wallace**: Brian Montgomery  
- **José Castro**: Helmut Berger-Tuna  
- **Un postiglione**: Roland Kandlbinder  

**Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks**  
(Michael Gläser)  

- **Münchner Rundfunkorchester**  
  - **Coach**: Pamela Bullock  
  - **Italian coach**: David Shaw  
  - **Producer**: Wolfram Graul  
  - **Recording Engineer**: Hans Schmid  
  - **Technician**: Uta von Reeken

### La Rondine

CBS Records Masterworks M2K 37852  
[London], 1982  

- **Conductor**: Lorin Maazel  
- **Magda**: Kiri Te Kanawa  
- **Ruggiero**: Placido Domingo  
- **Lisette**: Mariana Nicolesco  
- **Prunier**: David Rendall  
- **Rambaldo**: Leo Nucci  
- **Yvette**: Lillian Watson  
- **Bianca**: Gillian Knight  
- **Suzy**: Linda Finnie  
- **Gobin**: Vernon Midgley  
- **Périchaud**: Linsay Benson
Crébillon
Majordomo
Georgette
Gabriella
Lolette
Rabonier
Adolfo
Un Cantare
Student
Ambrosian Opera Chorus
(John McCarthy)
London Symphony Orchestra
Rehearsal Pianist
Italian Language Coach
Producer
Recording Engineers
Technical Supervisor

Il Tabarro
Eurodisc 7775-2-RC
[Munich], March 18-27, 1987
Conductor
Michele
Giorgetta
Luigi
Il Tinca
Il Talpa
La Frugola
Venditore di canzonette
Due amanti

Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks
(Hans-Peter Rauscher)
Münchner Rundfunkorchester
Producer
Recording Engineer
Technical Engineer
Production Co-ordinator

Suor Angelica
Eurodisc 7806-2-RC
[Munich], November 17-21, 1987
Conductor
Suor Angelica
La Zia Principessa
La Badessa

David Beavan
Oliver Broome
Maryetta Midgley
Mary Thomas
Ursala Connors
Bruce Ogston
Alan Byers
Elizabeth Gale
Wynford Evans

Mary Nash
Guia Rossi-Mancio
Steven Epstein
Peter Brown & Bud Graham
Graham Kirkby

Giuseppe Patané
Siegmund Nimsgern
Ilona Tokody
Giorgio Lamberti
Tullio Pane
Gerhard Auer
Vera Baniewicz
Ullrich Reß
Karin Hautermann
Heinrich Weber

Theodor Holzinger
Alfons Seebacher
Monika Dollmann
Lydia Störle

Giuseppe Patané
Lucia Popp
Marjana Lipovsek
Marga Schiml
La Suora Zelatrice
La Maestra delle Novizie
Suor Genovieffa
Suor Osmina
Suor Dolcina
La Suor Infermiera
La Cercatrice 1
La Cercatrice 2
La Novizia
La Conversa 1
La Conversa 2
Chor des Bayerischen Rundfunks
   (Hans-Peter Rauscher)
Münchner Chorbuben
   (Bernd Reimann)
Münchner Rundfunkorchester
Producer
Recording Engineer
Technical Engineer
Production Coordinator

Diane Jennings
Birgit Calm
Maria Gabriella Ferroni
Maria Gabriella Ferroni
Mechthild Georg
Valerie Errante
Ellen van Lier
Karin Hauermann
Ellen van Lier
Monika Schmitt
Adelheid Schiller
Theodor Holzinger
Alfons Seebacher
Monika Dollmann
Lydia Störel

Gianni Schicchi
Eurodisc 7751-2-RC
[Munich], March 18-27, 1987
Conductor
Gianni Schicchi
Lauretta
Zita
Rinuccio
Gherardo
Nella
Gherardino
Betto di Signa
Simone
Marco
La Ciesca
Maestro Spinelloccio
Ser Amantino di Nicolao
Pinellino
Guccio
Münchner Rundfunkorchester
Producer
Recording Engineer
Technical Engineer
Production Coordinator

Giuseppe Patané
Rolando Panerai
Helen Donath
Vera Baniewicz
Peter Seiffert
Tullio Pane
Valerie Errante
Claudio Kunz
Gerhard Auer
Franco Federici
Robert Rienr
Mechthild Georg
Walter Zeh
Raimund Grumbach
Marcel Rosca
Axel Wagner
Theodor Holzinger
Alfons Seebacher
Monika Dollmann
Lydia Störel

208
Turandot
London 414 274-2
Kingsway Hall, London, August 1972
Conductor Zubin Mehta
Turandot Joan Sutherland
Calaf Luciano Pavarotti
Liu Montserrat Caballé
Timur Nicolai Ghiaurov
L'Imperatore Altoum Peter Pears
Ping Tom Krause
Pang Pier Francesco Poli
Pong Piero de Palma
Un Mandarino Sabin Markov
Il Principe di Persia Pier Francesco Poli
John Alldis Choir (John Alldis)
Wandsworth School Boys' Choir (Russell Burgess)
London Philharmonic Orchestra
Stylistic Adviser Roberto Benaglio
Producers Ray Minshull & Michael Woolcook
Recording Engineers Kenneth Wilkinson & James Lock
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Serpa, Franco. "Tosca and Pessimism."
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"Appendix C: Plot Summaries."


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