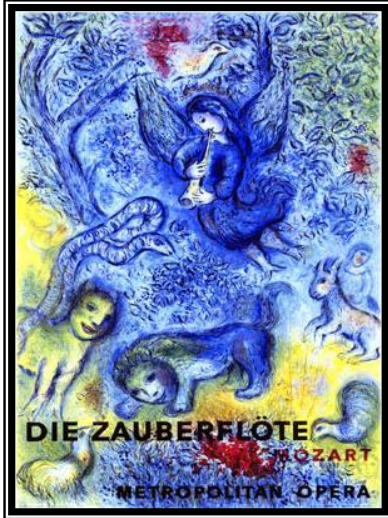


The Pescadero Opera Society presents

The Magic Flute



Music by
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto in English by
J. D. McClatchy

Opera in Two Acts

Setting: Near the Temple of Isis, Memphis
Time: Egypt, about the reign of Rameses I

Characters

Sarastro, High Priest of Isis (bass).....	Réne Pape
Queen of the Night (soprano)	Erika Miklósa
Pamina, Queen of the Night's daughter (soprano).....	Ying Huang
Tamino, an Egyptian Prince (tenor).....	Matthew Polenzani
Papageno, a bird-catcher (baritone).....	Nathan Gunn
Papagena, an old hag (soprano).....	Jennifer Aylmer
Speaker, an old priest (speaking voice)	David Pittsinger
First Priest (bass)	Brian Davis
Second Priest (tenor)	Tony Stevenson
Monostatos, a Moor, chief slave of the temple (baritone)	Greg Fedderly
First Lady (soprano)	Wendy Bryn Hamer
Second Lady (soprano).....	Kate Lindsey
Third Lady (soprano).....	Tamara Mumford
First Spirit (treble)	Bennett Kosma
Second Spirit (treble).....	Jesse Burnside Murray
Third Spirit (treble).....	Jacob A. Wade
First Guard (tenor).....	Michael Myers
Second Guard (bass).....	Robert Lloyd

Conducted by James Levine
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus

Première performance on September 30, 1791, at the Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna, Austria

Synopsis

Act I

Scene 1: A Deserted Place



Tamino, a handsome young prince, is chased by a huge serpent into the realm of the Queen of the Night. He calls for help and faints from fear. Three Ladies-in-Waiting, attendants to the Queen of the Night, answer his plea and kill the serpent. The ladies sing of their joy in foiling the snake and of the good looks of the man they have rescued. They immediately lose their hearts to the handsome youth, but quickly depart to report his prophetic arrival to the Queen of the Night.

Tamino awakens to see a man covered in feathers dancing towards him playing a panpipe. It is Papageno, the Queen's bird catcher. Papageno sings of catching birds and looking for someone to love. Papageno tells the stunned Tamino that he is in the realm of the Queen of the Night. Upon seeing the dead serpent, he brags that it was him that killed the serpent. The Three Ladies reappear and punish Papageno for lying by putting a padlock on his mouth. They give Tamino a gift from the Queen, a portrait of her beautiful daughter, Pamina. The Three Ladies then exit.

Transfixed by the beauty of the portrait of Pamina, Tamino falls magically in love. The Three Ladies return and tell of Pamina's imprisonment in the palace of Sarastro, by the cruel, lecherous Moor,¹ Monostatos. Tamino vows to rescue her Pamina.

The Queen of the Night suddenly appears. She promises Tamino the hand of her daughter, should he manage to rescue her. Tamino seeks hopelessly to unlock the mouth of the struggling Papageno. The Three Ladies reappear and remove the padlock from Papageno's mouth. They give Tamino a magic flute to aid him in his quest to save Pamina. Papageno, who is commanded to accompany Tamino, is given a set of magic bells, to protect him on the journey. Tamino and Papageno realize that they do not know the way to the Sarastro's palace. The Ladies instruct the two young men to follow the advice of three young and wise boys, who will hover about them. The Queen and the Three Ladies disappear.

Scene 2: A richly furnished apartment in Sarastro's palace

Three slaves gloat at the misfortune of the brutish Moor, Monostatos. He was to guard the Queen's daughter; but, due to the complications of a foiled sexual advance, she was able to escape.

Monostatos enters, having recaptured Pamina, and is treating her brutally. She faints. Papageno enters. He and Monostatos see each other. Both run away, thinking that the other is the Devil. Pamina recovers from her collapse. Papageno regains his composure and reenters. He recognizes Pamina as the daughter of the Queen of the Night and tells her not to be afraid because she will soon be rescued by someone who has fallen in love with her. She immediately falls eternally in love with Tamino. Papageno laments that nothing like this ever happens to him. Pamina assures him that he will one day also know love. Papageno and Pamina ready their escape.

¹A member of a Muslim people of mixed Berber and Arab descent, living chiefly in northwest Africa.

Scene 3: At the Portals of the Temples of Wisdom, Logic, and Nature

The three boys have led Tamino to the Temples and encourage him that manly behavior and persistence will lead him to Pamina. They exit.

Tamino decides to enter two of the Temples and is turned back. Attempting to enter the last portal, he is confronted by a priest who tells Tamino that Sarastro is not a demon as he has been told, but a guardian of virtue. He adds that Tamino only has a chance of uniting with Pamina if he joins Sarastro's sun cult. The priest exits.

Tamino plays the flute, hoping to find Pamina, but the magical music enchants only wild animals from the surrounding area, who come out from their lairs and lie at his feet. They dance joyfully to the flute's melody. Before he can finish his song, Tamino hears the sound of Papageno's panpipe and rushes off to find him.

Papageno comes in from the other side of the stage leading Pamina, who he intends to unite with Tamino. They are suddenly overtaken by Monostatos and his slaves. Papageno plays his magic chimes, which enchant Monostatos and the slaves into a euphoric dance.

Pamina and Papageno rejoice at their escape, but they are overtaken by Sarastro and a ceremonious procession of his sun priests. Papageno is relieved of his magic bells. Pamina begs for mercy. She explains that she was trying to escape from Monostatos. Sarastro promises not to force her to love him, for he knows that she loves Tamino. He refuses, however, to grant her freedom. He tells her that her mother is subject to his power, that Pamina should better follow a man's rather than a woman's advice.

Monostatos enters, having captured Tamino and having taken away his magic flute. He denounces him to Sarastro who has Monostatos beaten for his advances on Pamina.

Pamina and Tamino see each other for the first time. They are in love. Sarastro commands them to the Temple of Ordeal, where they must prove they are worthy of higher happiness. The priests place hoods over their heads who are then led away for purification before entry into the temple.

Act II

Scene 1: Outside the Temple

Sarastro and the priests enter in ceremonious procession. Bowing to Sarastro's counsel, the priests have ordained that Pamina shall become Tamino's bride, but only if he is worthy of entering the Temple of Light. The couple must go through severe ordeals, thus thwarting the sinister schemes of the Queen of the Night. Sarastro selects two priests to mentor Tamino and Papageno in their pursuit of virtue. The priests pray to Isis and Osiris that the two may be worthy of their goal and, should they fail, that Isis and Osiris take them into their eternal care.

Scene 2: A Foreboding Place

The scene opens revealing Tamino and Papageno frightened, not knowing their whereabouts. The ordeals of Tamino and Papageno are about to begin. They are warned that they may perish in their search for the Truth.

The two priests Sarastro designated as mentors enter the scene and assign the first trial. The first trial is the Vow of Silence. Tamino and Papageno must remain silent. They may see women but will not be allowed to speak. They are left alone in the darkness. The three Ladies of the Queen of the Night appear and try to get them to abandon their quest, but Tamino and Papageno remain silent. They are driven away by thunder and lightning as the chorus of priests warns of desecration of the holy temple grounds. The two mentor Priests reappear and congratulate Tamino and Papageno for having survived the first trial.

Scene 3: A garden

Eaten with lust, Monostatos observes Pamina in her sleep. He steals towards her doing a suggestive dance. The Queen appears and drives him away. The Queen presents a dagger that she has forged in order to kill Sarastro. She orders Pamina to fulfill this mission. Pamina is instructed to recover the powerful sun circle, which is the source of Sarastro's strength. The Queen threatens Pamina that she will be disowned if she fails in this task. The Queen vanishes.

Desperate and torn, and thinking herself alone, Pamina declares herself incapable of murder. Having listened in on the plot to murder Sarastro, Monostatos tries to blackmail Pamina into rendering herself to him, but she refuses. Angered, Monostatos proceeds to wield the dagger on Pamina. Before Pamina can be harmed, Sarastro enters and disarms Monostatos. Sarastro bans him from the realm of the brotherhood.

Pamina pleads that Sarastro forgive her mother for the murderous undertaking. Sarastro declares that vengeance is alien to the principles of his brotherhood. The Queen, he says, should fully accept her utter defeat and humiliation.

Scene 4: A Foreboding Place

Utter silence. The two mentor priests lead Tamino and Papageno, their heads covered, onto the scene. The priests instruct them to stay silent. They are to remain in this place until the sounding of trombones. Then they are to proceed in the direction indicated by the priests.

An ugly old hag appears and gives Papageno a cup of water, which he shuns as poor hospitality. She intimates to him that she is his predestined partner. He is horror-struck. He asks her name. Before she can answer, there is a blast of thunder and she disappears.

The Three Boys enter and bring a table full of delicious food and wine. They also return to Tamino and Papageno the magic flute and magic bells. The Boys promise them victory if they remain courageous and silent. Papageno unleashes his voracious appetite.

Pamina enters and is ecstatic to finally be united with her destined lover, but he does not respond to her. Knowing nothing of his vow of silence, she is crushed and declares that only death could soothe the pain of her unrequited love. She leaves in utter dejection.

Trombones sound. After struggling to separate Papageno from his food, Tamino exits. Only after having been threatened by Sarastro's lions does Papageno leave.

Scene 5: A Ritualistic Place

The Priests sing a solemn chorus of praise to Isis and Osiris that Tamino will successfully withstand his trials. Sarastro has Tamino brought in and instructs him that he has but two trials to endure. He then has Pamina brought in and tells her, in the event of Tamino's failure, to bid her final farewell. Sarastro adds, however, that Tamino's success is probable, in which case the two would be reunited. Sarastro, priests, Tamino, Pamina exit.

Papageno enters, but is blocked by thunder from leaving the room. His mentor priest enters and informs him that, due to his inability to keep the vow of silence, he will not be admitted to the brotherhood of Sarastro's sun cult. The priest also informs Papageno of the clemency of the gods — he will not be punished for his failure of the rites of initiation. Papageno notes that his proclivities are not unique and says his greatest pleasure for the time being would be a good glass of wine and nothing more. The priest declares that his wish will be fulfilled. A glass of wine appears. He drinks and sings of his longing for a wife to make his life complete.

The old hag enters and approaches Papageno. In order to be released from these gloomy confines, Papageno agrees to take her as his partner. In an instant, she is transformed into the beautiful bird-girl, Papagena. They approach each other for an embrace but, before this transpires, the priest sweeps Papagena away. Papageno is forced, at first, to remain behind.

Scene 6: A garden

The Three Boys are discovered singing of the symbolical joys of the rising sun, whose rays drive away the fears of the night. They find Pamina, driven to madness and preparing to take her life with the very dagger her mother forged for Sarastro's death. The Three Boys intercede and insure her of the immediacy of her reunion with Tamino. They promise to lead her to him.

Scene 7: A Mysterious Setting

Tamino is brought in by two men in armor for the last stage of his initiation — the trial of fire and water through which one is enlightened, so as to understand the mysteries of Isis and Osiris. Tamino readies to enter the Trial of Fire, but stops upon hearing Pamina's voice. She enters. The armored men allow Tamino and Pamina to embrace. He is not only overjoyed at being joined with her again, but he may speak with her freely. Pamina's sufferings have produced a maturity about her. The united pair resolves to undergo the trial together. Guided by the hand of love, and protected by the magic flute, Tamino and Pamina survive these final trials.



Tamino and Pamina undergo their final trial.
Watercolor by Max Slevogt

After the trial of Fire and Water, they are welcomed into the Temple by Sarastro and the Priests. A portal opens to the temple, revealing blindingly brilliant opulence. A chorus of priests revels in the couple's victory and invites them to enter the temple.

Scene 8: A Garden

Papageno is seen playing his panpipes, desperately searching for Papagena, but in vain. Deeply saddened, he prepares to hang himself. The Three Boys intercede and remind him to play his magic bells instead of the panpipe. He plays his bells and Papagena appears. The bird pair unites and sings joyfully of the prospect that the gods grant them the greatest of all blessings — many, many children.

Scene 9: At the Portals of Sarastro's Temple

Monostatos leads the Queen and her Ladies to the temple's entrance. They are to destroy the temple and recover the powerful sun circle. The Queen has promised Monostatos the hand of Pamina, should they succeed in their destructive conspiracy. There is horrifying thunder and lightning. Their appearance coincides with a flood of light that drives away the forces of the night. There is a final chorus extolling the initiates. The Queen and her followers sink into oblivion.

The entire theater becomes a sun. Sarastro and his priests celebrate their victory over the Queen of the Night. They rejoice in Tamino's induction into the priesthood and in the union of the prince with Pamina.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria; Died: December 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria



Born to Leopold and Anna Maria Pertl, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was one of two surviving children. When Wolfgang was four (as noted by his father in his sister's music book), he was playing the same pieces as his sister, Maria Anna, who was a gifted keyboard player. At the age of five, he wrote a miniature andante and allegro. In 1762, Leopold took Wolfgang and Maria Anna on tour throughout Vienna performing for nobles and ambassadors. Later in 1763, Leopold took Wolfgang and Maria Anna on a three-and-a-half year tour throughout Germany, France, England, Switzerland, and other countries.

Amid the many tours, Mozart wrote music for a number of occasions. In 1770, Mozart (only 14) was commissioned to write an opera (*Mitridate, re di Ponto*) by that December. He began work on the opera in October and by December 26, after eight rehearsals, the show was performed. The show, which included several ballets from other composers, lasted six hours. To much of Leopold's surprise, the opera was a huge success and went on to perform 22 more times.

In 1777 Mozart left Salzburg with his mother to search for a higher paying job. His travels led him to Paris, where unfortunately, his mother became deathly ill. Mozart's efforts to find a better job were unfruitful. He returned home two years later and continued working in the court as an organist with accompanying duties, rather than as a violinist. Mozart was offered an increase in salary and generous leave.

After the successful premier of the opera *Idomenée* in 1781 in Munich, Mozart returned to Salzburg. Wanting to be released from his job as court organist, Mozart met with the archbishop. In March of 1781, Mozart was finally released from his duties and began working freelance. A year later, Mozart gave his first public concert consisting entirely of his own compositions.

Mozart married Constanze Weber in July of 1782, despite his father's constant disapprovals. As Mozart's compositions flourished, his debts did too; money always seemed a bit tight. In 1787, Mozart's father, Leopold, died. The effects of his father's death was devastating to Mozart, and can be seen in a lull in new compositions. Four years later, in 1791, at the age of thirty-five, Mozart died of miliary fever, an infectious disease that causes an acute fever and skin rashes similar to the cereal grain called proso millet. He was buried with little ceremony in a suburb of Vienna, in an unmarked grave, in accordance with prevailing custom.

Mozart Trivia

- "Köchel" numbers are used instead of opus numbers to designate the works of Mozart.
- Of the 41 symphonies that Mozart wrote, only two are in a minor key, both of which are in g minor (Symphonies No. 25 and No. 40).
- Mozart's music was often criticized as being too complex and "having too many notes."
- Mozart was known to take familiar musical lines from one piece of music and insert them into another piece of music.

The Magic Flute



The Magic Flute (*Die Zauberflöte*) premiered on September 30, 1791, two months before Mozart's death. It is in the form of a "singspiel" (song-play), a form of German light opera that includes both singing and spoken dialogue.

The premiere was at an out-of-town, but not obscure, theater in Vienna, Austria. Mozart's librettist, Emanuel Schikaneder, played the role of Papageno, while the Queen was played by Mozart's sister-in-law, Josepha Hofer. The opera was not an immediate success, but slowly, thanks to Schikaneder's business acumen, it gained in popularity. By November 1792, Schikaneder announced the opera's 100th performance.

Today, it remains one of the most-performed works in the repertoire.

Mozart wrote his music keeping in mind the skills of the singers intended for the premiere, which included both virtuosi and ordinary comic actors who were asked to sing for the occasion. Thus, the vocal lines for Papageno and Monostatos are often stated first in the strings so the singer can find his pitch, and are frequently doubled by instruments. In contrast, the role of the Queen of the Night evidently needed little such help. This particularly demanding aria reaches a high F6, which is rare in opera. The part of Sarastro includes a conspicuous F in a few locations, while the female roles in the opera are assigned to different voice types. The playbill for the premiere performance referred to all of the female singers as "sopranos." The casting of the roles relies on the actual pitch range of the part.

The Magic Flute has often been dubbed "The Freemason Opera" by many music critics and scholars because of the many Masonic symbols throughout the opera which are rife and often elaborate. Emanuel Johann Schikaneder, who wrote the libretto with the aid of a chorister named Gieseke, was a friend of Mozart and a member of the same Masonic Lodge. The use of the number three, for example, is very significant — the opera begins and ends on the same three chords, there are Three Ladies and Three Boys, and three doors to the Sun Temple. However, in the political climate of the times, Freemasonry was considered a dangerous organization.

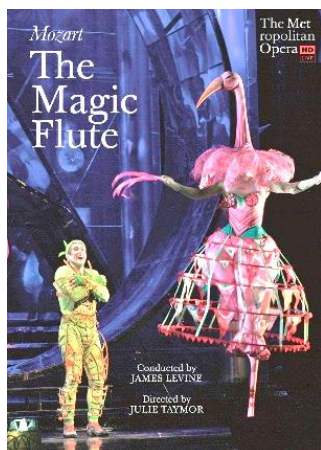
The libretto to *The Magic Flute* is considered such a jumble of nonsense that it is as well to endeavor to extract some sense from it. Schikaneder was also the manager of a theatrical company and persuaded Mozart to compose the music to a puppet show, the story of *Lulu* by Liebeskind, which had appeared in a volume of Oriental tales brought out by Wieland under the title of *Dschinnistan*. In the original tale a wicked sorcerer stole the daughter of the Queen of Night, who is restored by a Prince by means of magic.

The Magic Flute was Mozart's swan-song in opera and perhaps his greatest popular success. Yet, he is said to have made little or no money from it, having reserved as his compensation the right to dispose of copies of the score to other theaters. Copies, however, were procured surreptitiously. Mozart's last illness set in and, poor business man that he was, others reaped the rewards of his genius.

In 1801, ten years after Mozart's death, an extraordinary version of *The Magic Flute* was produced in Paris, entitled *Les Mystères d'Isis* (*The Mysteries of Isis*). Underlying this was a considerable portion of *The Magic Flute* score, but also introduced in it were fragments from other works of the composer (*Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *Clemenza di Tito*) and even bits from Haydn symphonies. Yet, this hodge-podge not only had great success — owing to the magic of Mozart's music — it actually was revived more than a quarter of a century later, and the real *Magic Flute* was not given in Paris until 1829.

The Magic Flute: The Video (2006)

Starring Matthew Polenzani, Ying Huang, Nathan Gunn; conducted by James Levine



The Magic Flute has delighted audiences of all ages for centuries. Julie Taymor's dazzling fantastical production brings one of Mozart's greatest works to life as never before. Her costumes are filled with her signature magical puppets and colorful effects that we were enchanted by in *The Lion King*. This abridged "Flute," is sung in English, targeting families with children. It will also charm a newcomer to opera.

Mozart-lovers might be jarred by the cuts that get the opera down to a 112-minute family-friendly affair. Whole stretches of spoken dialogue are dispensed with and entire chunks of the score, including the overture and certain arias, are also omitted. But the cuts are sensitively made and don't seem to hinder the production.

The cast is excellent. The antics of Papageno, the hapless bird catcher, is sung by hearty baritone Nathan Gunn (returning to one of his best Met roles). Matthew Polenzani sings Tamino with a tender yet ample lyric tenor voice. Soprano Ying Huang, in her Met debut, sings a lovely, sweet-toned Pamina. Soprano Erika Miklósa, the Queen of the Night, handles the skittish runs and leaps to high F with uncanny ease and accuracy. The powerful bass René Pape sings Sarastro.