



Department of Music

A Night at the Opera

McLennan Community Orchestra

Central Texas Choral Society

McLennan Opera

Conducted by Peter Olson and David Guess

Edgar Sierra, tenor

Kelly Palmer, mezzo-soprano

Willow Weaver, mezzo-soprano

Friday, October 24, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 26, 2025, 3:00 p.m.

Wilbur A. Ball Performing Arts Center

Repertoire

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

“Per te d’immenso giubilo” (Chorus of the Gaetano Donizetti
Wedding Guests) from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1797–1848)
Edgar Sierra, tenor

Prelude and Scene 1 (Bridal Chorus) Richard Wagner
from Act III of *Lohengrin* (1813–1883)

"Una furtiva lagrima" from *L'elisir d'amore* Gaetano Donizetti
(1797–1848)
Edgar Sierra, tenor

Selections from *Carmen* Georges Bizet
(1838–1875)

Prélude

Aragonaise

Seguidilla *Willow Weaver, mezzo-soprano*

Intermezzo

Habanera *Kelly Palmer, mezzo-soprano*

Les Toréadors

"Va, pensiero" (Chorus of the Giuseppe Verdi
Hebrew Slaves) from *Nabucco* (1813–1901)

Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor* Alexander Borodin
(1833–1887)

Please turn off or silence all cell phones.

Program Notes

The combination of music and storytelling seems to be an essential form of human artistic expression. Artists across cultures and throughout time have created dramatic works with music. **Opera** is simply the name for this combination in seventeenth-century Italy, a form that then spread to France, Austria, Russia, and throughout Europe. Our concert explores selections from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European operas.

Opera is all about drama, which of course often involves romance, so it is natural to begin with three “wedding” selections. The context—and end result—of each is quite different, however.

Mozart composed his opera *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*) in 1786. The story revolves around the wedding day of Figaro and Suzanna, servants in Count Almaviva’s household. The Count has his own plans for Suzanna, however, and the comedy unfolds as Figaro and Suzanna outsmart the Count. The **Overture** is the instrumental introduction to the opera, and although there is no singing or text, we can hear the comedy in the music. In the end, Figaro and Suzanna are married, the Count is forgiven, and everyone enjoys the wedding.

Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* tells a story of forbidden love between Lucia and Edgardo. Lucia’s brother convinces her (with the help of a fake letter) to marry Arturo instead, for the good of the family. The chorus sings “**Per te d’immenso giubilo**” as they arrive for the wedding.

CORO

Per te d’immenso giubilo
tutto s’avviva intorno,
per te veggiam rinascere
della speranza il giorno,
qui l’amistà ti guida,
qui ti conduce amore,
tutto s’avviva intorno,
qui ti conduce amor,
qual astro in notte infida,
qual riso nel dolor.

CHORUS

For you, all around
we join in rousing jubilation,
because of you, we see
reborn the day of hope,
here friendship guides you,
here love leads you,
new life is all around,
here love leads you,
like a star on a treacherous night,
like laughter in sorrow.

ARTURO

Per poco fra le tenebre
sparì la vostra stella.
io la farò risorgere
più fulgida, più bella.
La man mi porgi, Enrico,
ti stringi a questo cor,
a te ne vengo amico,
fratello e difensor.

ARTURO

Your fortune’s star has suffered
a brief eclipse,
I shall see it rise again
brighter and more splendid.
Give me your hand, Enrico,
and accept my cordial greeting,
I come to you as friend,
brother and protector.

(https://www.murashev.com/opera/Lucia_di_Lammermoor_libretto_English_Italian101)

Program Notes

Unfortunately, this scene is the end of the happiness, because Edgardo shows up right after the marriage is finalized and denounces Lucia. In the next act, Lucia goes mad and kills Arturo, collapses, and later dies. Edgardo takes his own life to be reunited with Lucia in heaven.

Wagner's operas are the epitome of Romanticism, full of dramatic situations and characters. In *Lohengrin*, a noblewoman, Elsa, is falsely accused of killing her brother. In the last moment, a mysterious Knight appears to be her champion. He promises to defend Elsa's honor and marry her, on the condition that she never asks his name or where he comes from. At the beginning of Act III, after a heroic instrumental **Prelude**, the well-known **Bridal Chorus** accompanies the new couple as they leave their wedding.

Treulich geführt ziehet dahin,
wo euch der Segen der Liebe
bewahr'!

Siegreicher Mut, Minnegewinn
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten
Paar.

Streiter der Tugend, schreite voran!
Zierde der Jugend, schreite voran!
Rauschen des Festes seid nun
entronnen,
Wonne des Herzens sei euch
gewonnen!

Duftender Raum, zur Liebe
geschmückt,
nehm' euch nun auf, dem Glanze
entrückt.

Treulich geführt ziehet nun ein,
wo euch der Segen der Liebe
bewahr'!

Siegreicher Mut, Minne so rein
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten
Paar.

Wie Gott euch selig weihte,
zu Freude weihn euch wir;
In Liebesglücks Geleite
denkt lang' der Stunde hier!

Treulich bewacht bleibt zurück,
wo euch der Segen der Liebe
bewahr'!

Siegreicher Mut, Minne und Glück

Faithfully guided, draw near
to where the blessing of love shall preserve
you!

Triumphant courage, the reward of love,
joins you in faith as the happiest of
couples!

Champion of virtue, proceed!
Jewel of youth, proceed!
Flee now the splendour of the wedding
feast,
may the delights of the heart be yours!

This sweet-smelling room, decked for
love,
now takes you in, away from the
splendour.

Faithfully guided, draw now near
to where the blessing of love shall preserve
you!

Triumphant courage, love so pure,
joins you in faith as the happiest of
couples!

As God hath blessedly consecrated you,
We consecrate you to joy;
Attended by love's bliss,
Think long upon the present hour!

Faithfully guarded, remain behind,
where the blessing of love shall preserve
you!

Triumphant courage, love and happiness,

Program Notes

eint euch in Treue zum seligsten
Paar.
Streiter der Tugend, bleibe daheim!
Zierde der Jugend, bleibe daheim!
Rauschen des Festes seid nun
entronnen,
Wonne des Herzens sei euch
gewonnen!

Duftender Raum, zur Liebe
geschmückt,
nehm euch nun auf, dem Glanze
entrückt.
Treulich bewacht bleibt zurück,
wo euch der Segen der Liebe
bewahrt!
Siegreicher Mut, Minne und Glück
eint euch in Treue zum seligsten
Paar!

joins you in faith as the most blessed of
couples!
Champion of virtue, stay where you are!
Jewel of youth, stay where you are!
Flee now the splendour of the wedding
feast,
may the delights of the heart be yours!

This sweet-smelling room, decked for
love,
now takes you in, away from the
splendour.
Faithfully guided, remain behind,
where the blessing of love shall preserve
you!
Triumphant courage, love and happiness,
joins you in faith as the most blessed of
couples!

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridal_Chorus)

Unfortunately, the pagan witch Ortrud has been working on sowing doubts in Elsa's mind, and Elsa asks the Knight to reveal his name and where he came from. He is Lohengrin, Knight of the Holy Grail, and must return home once his identity is known. A swan-boat appears, and he sails off to his castle, but not before the swan is revealed to be Elsa's missing brother and is turned back into a human. Elsa, however, still falls dead from grief.

Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* (*The Elixir of Love*) is a comedic opera about a peasant man, Nemorino, who falls in love with Adina. He pays a quack doctor for a love potion and starts to convince himself in “**Una furtiva lagrima**” that Adina is falling in love with him after he sees a tear in her eye.

Una furtiva lagrima
negli occhi suoi spuntò:
Quelle festose giovani
invidiar sembrò.

Che più cercando io vo?
Che più cercando io vo?
M'ama! Sì, m'ama,
lo vedo, lo vedo.

Un solo istante i palpiti
del suo bel cor sentir!
I miei sospir confondere
per poco a' suoi sospir!

A furtive tear
in her eyes appeared:
Those festive young girls
she seemed to envy.

What more need I look for?
What more need I look for?
She loves me! Yes, she loves me,
I see it, I see it.

For a single instant the beats
of her beautiful heart to hear!
My sighs to blend
for a while with her sighs!

Program Notes

I palpiti, i palpiti sentir,
confondere i miei co' suoi sospir.

Cielo, si può morir;
di più non chiedo, non chiedo.
Ah, cielo! Si può! Si può morir!
Di più non chiedo, non chiedo.
Si può morir! Si può morir d'amor.

Her heartbeats, her heartbeats to hear,
my sighs with hers to merge.

Heavens! One could die!
More I cannot ask, I cannot ask.
Oh, heavens! One could, one could die!
More I cannot ask, I cannot ask.
One could die! One could die of love!

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Una_furtiva_lagrima)

Eventually Adina realizes she does love Nemorino after seeing his unfailing devotion (through quite a bit of confusion and several plot twists). In the end, Nemorino inherits a surprise fortune from his uncle and the “doctor” profits off the success of his elixir.

Bizet's music for **Carmen** is beautifully evocative of the various characters and settings involved. The opera tells yet another story of unrequited and forbidden love, this time between a Spanish soldier, José, and a Gypsy, Carmen. We perform selections from both the opera and the orchestral suite, beginning with the **Prélude**—which opens the opera and seems to foreshadow the tragic ending—and the **Aragonesa**—which sets the stage for Act IV, set outside a bullfight in Seville. Toward the beginning of the opera, Carmen is arrested for causing trouble. As José guards her, she begins to sing a provocative song (based on a Spanish **Seguidilla** dance) about going to Lillas Pastia's inn.

Près des remparts de Séville
chez mon ami Lillas Pastia,
j'irai danser la seguidille
et boire du Manzanilla,
j'irai chez mon ami Lillas Pastia.
Oui, mais toute seule on s'ennuie,
et les vrais plaisirs sont à deux;
donc pour me tenir compagnie,
j'emmènerai mon amoureux!
Mon amoureux!.. il est au diable!
Je l'ai mis à la porte hier!
Mon pauvre coeur, très consolable,
mon coeur est libre comme l'air!
J'ai des galants à la douzaine;
mais ils ne sont pas à mon gré.
Voici la fin de la semaine:
qui veut m'aimer? je l'aimerai!
Qui veut mon âme? Elle est à
prendre!
Vous arrivez au bon moment!
Je n'ai guère le temps d'attendre,

Right by the walls of Sevilla,
At my old friend Lillas Pastia's,
I'll go to dance the seguidilla
And drink some manzanilla,
I'll go to my old friend Lillas Pastia's.
But all alone it's not much fun,
True pleasure is when you're a pair;
So, to make sure I've got someone,
I'll bring my lover with me there!
My lover man! To hell with him now!
I broke up with him yesterday!
And my poor heart's ripe for a whim now,
My heart is free, it's free to play!
I am pursued by scores of gallants;
But none that I like through and through.
Now here's the weekend—what's the
balance?
Who will love me? I'll love him too!
Who wants my soul? It's ripe for mating!
You have arrived right with the tide!
I have no time to waste by waiting,

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car avec mon nouvel amant
près des remparts de Séville,
chez mon ami Lillas Pastia,
Nous danserons la séguedille
Et boirons du Manzanilla.

For with my new man by my side,
Right by the walls of Sevilla,
At my old friend Lillas Pastia's,
We will dance the seguidilla
And drink some manzanilla.

(<http://faculty.ce.berkeley.edu/coby/songtr/carmen/seguidilla.htm>)

José is intrigued and unties Carmen's hands, which leads to his punishment and eventual return to Carmen as a disgraced soldier. The *Intermezzo* serves as an interlude before Act III, a calm moment before things begin to go poorly. The *Habanera*, based on another Spanish dance, comes from earlier in the opera, when Carmen sings about untamed love, with the crowd repeating parts of the text.

L'amour est un oiseau rebelle
Que nul ne peut apprivoiser,
Et c'est bien en vain qu'on l'appelle,
S'il lui convient de refuser;
Rien n'y fait, menace ou prière,
L'un parle bien, l'autre se tait;
Et c'est l'autre que je préfère,
Il n'a rien dit, mais il me plaît.

Love is a rebellious bird
That none can tame,
And it is quite in vain that one calls it,
If it suits it to refuse;
Nothing to be done, threat or plea.
The one talks well, the other is silent;
And it's the other that I prefer,
He said nothing, but he pleases me.

L'amour est enfant de bohème,
Il n'a jamais, jamais connu de loi,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime,
Si je t'aime, prends garde à toi!
(Prends garde à toi!)
Si tu ne m'aimes pas,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime!
Mais si je t'aime, si je t'aime,
Prends garde à toi!

Love is a gypsy child,
It has never, never known a law,
If you don't love me, I love you,
If I love you, be on your guard!
(Be on your guard!)
If you don't love me,
If you don't love me, then I love you!
But if I love you, if I love you,
Be on your guard!

Si tu ne m'aimes pas,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime!
(Prends garde à toi!)
Mais si je t'aime, si je t'aime,
Prends garde à toi!

If you don't love me,
If you don't love me, I love you!
(Be on your guard!)
But if I love you, if I love you,
Be on your guard!

L'oiseau que tu croyais surprendre
Battit de l'aile et s'envola,
L'amour est loin, tu peux l'attendre;
Tu ne l'attends plus, il est là!
Tout autour de toi, vite, vite,
Il vient, s'en va, puis il revient;
Tu crois le tenir, il t'évite;
Tu crois l'éviter, il te tient!

The bird you hoped to catch
Beat its wings and flew away,
Love is far, you can wait for it;
You no longer await it, there it is!
All around you, swift, swift,
It comes, goes, then it returns;
You think to hold it fast, it dodges you;
You think to dodge it, it holds you!

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L'amour est enfant de bohème,
Il n'a jamais, jamais connu de loi,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime,
Si je t'aime, prends garde à toi!
(Prends garde à toi!)
Si tu ne m'aimes pas,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime!
Mais si je t'aime, si je t'aime,
Prends garde à toi!

Si tu ne m'aimes pas,
Si tu ne m'aimes pas, je t'aime!
(Prends garde à toi!)
Mais si je t'aime, si je t'aime,
Prends garde à toi!

Love is a gypsy child,
It has never, never known a law,
If you don't love me, I love you;
If I love you, be on your guard!
(Be on your guard!)
If you don't love me,
If you don't love me, then I love you!
But if I love you, if I love you,
Be on your guard!

If you don't love me,
If you don't love me, then I love you!
(Be on your guard!)
But if I love you, if I love you,
Be on your guard!

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habanera_\(aria\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habanera_(aria)))

José does not heed the warning, however, and falls in love with Carmen. She soon gets bored with him and moves on to a bullfighter, who sings the toreador's song. (We perform the orchestral version of **Les Toréadors** from the prelude to the opera.) After Carmen rejects José a final time, he stabs her.

Verdi's *Nabucco* is loosely based on the Biblical account of the Babylonian captivity under Nebuchadnezzar II ("Nabucco"). The plight of the Jews serves as the backdrop for a story of love, betrayal, and political intrigue. However, the beautiful **Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves** is simply a reflection on and longing for their homeland.

Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate;
va, ti posa sui clivi, sui colli,
ove olezzano tepide e molli
l'aure dolci del suolo natal!

Del Giordano le rive saluta,
di Sionne le torri atterrate.
O, mia patria, sì bella e perduta!
O, membranza, sì cara e fata!

Arpa d'or dei fatidici vati,
perché muta dal salice pendi?
Le memorie nel petto raccendi,
ci favella del tempo che fu!

O simile di Sòlima ai fati
traggi un suono di crudo lamento,
o t'ispiri il Signore un concento
che ne infonda al patire virtù!

Fly, my thoughts, on wings of gold;
go settle upon the slopes and the hills,
where, soft and mild, the sweet airs
of my native land smell fragrant!

Greet the banks of the Jordan
and Zion's toppled towers.
O my homeland, so lovely and lost!
O memories so dear and yet so deadly!

Golden harp of the prophets of old,
why do you now hang silent upon the willow?
Rekindle the memories in our hearts,
and speak of times gone by!

Mindful of the fate of Solomon's temple,
Cry out with raw lamentation,
or else may the Lord strengthen you
to bear these sufferings!

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Va,_pensiero)

Program Notes

Verdi gained instant notoriety in Italy after composing this opera, and when he died, crowds spontaneously began singing this chorus as his funeral procession passed by. Some historians connect the popularity of this chorus to the movement for Italian independence and unification, but the connection is debated. Either way, the deeply meaningful text and music have moved audiences from Verdi's time to the present.

Borodin began composing his opera *Prince Igor* in 1869 but left it incomplete by his death in 1887. He was primarily a chemistry professor and often had trouble devoting time to composition, to the chagrin of his composer friends (some of whom completed the opera after his death). *Prince Igor* is a historical drama based on a 12th-century prince's wars with invading Cuman (Polovtsian) tribes. Because it was unfinished, the opera is often presented with the scenes in various different orders and the overall plot is somewhat static. However, selections of the music are often performed independently, including the **Polovtsian Dances**, in which the Khan's slaves sing of their homeland and the Polovtsians sing praises to their Khan.

Borne on wings of gentle breezes,
Fly swiftly home, ye songs of grief and exile,
Away to our far distant mother country,
Where once we sang, rejoicing in our freedom.
There, beneath warm skies the
Languid air moves softly,
There, the cloud-capp'd mountains
Dream beside the whisp'ring sea,
There the green and fragrant pastures
Of our dear land lie basking in the sunshine,
The crimson roses cluster in the valleys,
And nightingales sing loud in moon-lit forests,
And dusky glades.
And purple grapes hang ripe and sweet.
Speed, O song, by zephyrs wafted,
Speed, O song, on gentle winds.

Sing we praises to our glorious Khan!
Praise him for his valour, peerless Khan!
Praise our Khan! All Hail!
He is like the sun at midday! Hail!
There is no one like our glorious Khan!
Bend before him, lowly captives,
Praise him, praise him.
Praise our Khan, our glorious Khan!
Sing we praises to our glorious Khan!
Praise his valour, praise his conquests, Hail!
Mighty Khan, Hail!

Program Notes

Ruthless lord, Hail! Hail!
There is no one like our glorious Khan!
He is like the sun at midday! Hail!

Famous art thou as thy for bears,
Proud Khan! Konchak!
Mighty as thy sires art thou,
Ruthless Khan! Khan Konchak!
Hail to thee Khan Konchak!
Hail, all hail Khan Konchak!

Borne on wings...

Famous art thou...

May our dancing give him pleasure,
Look with favour on thy handmaids,
For we strive to please thee,
Lowly slaves we strive to please thee,
Maidens charm our glorious Khan.
May we give thee pleasure.
Maidens dance to please our master,
Maidens dance to please our master.
Strive to please him, Khan Konchak!
May our dancing give him pleasure,
Hail, Khan Konchak!

A special thanks to:

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Central UMC – Zakk Owens, Dave Brower, Mike Welch
MCC Visual and Performing Arts – Mandy Morrison, Randy Dockendorf,
Meghan Wilfong
Mike Makowski, Rehearsal Accompanist

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Hailee Yip*

* Principal

^S MCC Student

The McLennan Community Orchestra is a student and volunteer orchestra sponsored by McLennan Community College. The orchestra is made up of students, teachers, and other community members of diverse professions and ages who love to gather and make music together. The orchestra provides accessible performances of great orchestral works—both familiar and unfamiliar—to the community.

The MCO welcomes all string players and includes a limited number of winds and percussion. The group rehearses Thursday evenings. Full-time MCC students who play in the orchestra are eligible for scholarship. Interested players should contact orchestra@mcclennan.edu for more information.

Donations to the McLennan Community Orchestra may be made through the MCC Foundation (indicate the donation is for the orchestra):
www.mcclennan.edu/foundation.

Scan here to receive updates about
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The Central Texas Choral Society was reorganized in 2012 as an auditioned community chorus in the Central Texas area. CTCS evolved out of the Waco Civic Chorus, which was active beginning in the late 1970's. Former Baylor School of Music Professor Robert Young was the founding director of the chorus. Dr. Donald Balmos, then Director of the Department of Fine Arts at McLennan Community College, took over the responsibilities of leadership and musical direction in the mid 80's. John McLean, Assistant Choral Director at Baylor University, served as director 2001–2003. Current director, Dr. David Guess,

Personnel

sang with the chorus in the 1990's and took over the baton as President and Artistic Director in 2012.

The ensemble presents three to four concerts each season and is committed to the performance of important compositional milestones in the choral art. The ensemble also performs in smaller groups at local community activities throughout Central Texas.

CTCS members come from communities throughout Central Texas and consists of singers from all walks of life—doctors; lawyers; stay-at-home moms; business leaders and community activists; faculty from all levels of education; even high school singers who want to have a different musical experience.

CTCS is an official 501(c)(3) organization, and all monetary gifts of any amount are most welcome and tax deductible. All contributors will be acknowledged in concert programs. For further information:

Website – centraltexaschoralsociety.org
Facebook – Central Texas Choral Society
E-mail – centexchoralsociety@gmail.com

Donations may be mailed to:

Central Texas Choral Society, 405 Water Wood Circle, Woodway, TX 76712

CTCS would like to thank the following people. Without their generous support this performance could not happen.

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Meghan Wilfong, Senior Administrative Assistant

Bradley Christian, Dean of Arts and Sciences

ENSEMBLES

Noah Alvarado, *jazz*

Jon Conrad, *bands*

Jenna McLean, *choirs*

Clark Nauert, *jazz*

Peter Olson, *orchestra*

Edgar Sierra, *opera*

MUSIC INDUSTRY CAREERS

Jon Fox

Shane Hall

Brian Konzelman

Jonathan Kutz

Maddison Livingston

Patrick McKee

Clark Nauert

PERCUSSION

Jonathan Kutz

WINDS

Tristen Collinsworth, bassoon

Vanessa Davis, clarinet

Matthew Fowler, trombone

Clay Garrett, euphonium/tuba

Kim Hagelstein, horn

Masha Popova, flute

Mark Schubert, trumpet

Matthew Singletary, saxophone

STRINGS

Ben Cantrell, violin/viola

Kate Cockle, harp

Peter Olson, bass

PIANO

Jared Eben

Ping-Ting Lan

James Pitts

VOICE

Jenna McLean

Mandy Morrison

Edgar Sierra

MUSICOLOGY & THEORY

Kate Cockle

Jared Eben

Kim Hagelstein

Jenna McLean

Mandy Morrison

Peter Olson

James Pitts

Matthew Singletary

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Randy Dockendorf,

Theatre

Technician

Nick Webb, Box Office

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