

VICKI LEWIS  
**MASTER CLASS**



**atc**

ARIZONA  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

BY **TERRENCE McNALLY**  
DIRECTED BY **MARCIA MILGROM DODGE**

Study Guide Sponsored by  
**Tucson Desert Song Festival**

**STUDY GUIDE**



## ABOUT ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY

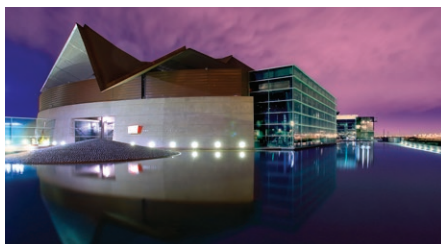
Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) is celebrating its 56th season, under the direction of Kasser Family Artistic Director Matt August and in partnership with Executive Director Geri Wright. ATC operates in two cities – unlike any other League of Resident Theatres (LORT) company in the country, and it boasts the largest subscriber base of any performing arts organization in Arizona, with more than 130,000 people each year attending performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson as well as in the Greater Phoenix Area at the incredible Tempe Center for the Arts in Tempe. Each season of carefully selected productions reflects the rich variety of world drama – from classic and contemporary plays to musicals and new works – as audiences enjoy a rich emotional experience that can only be captured through the power of live theatre. Touching lives through the power of theatre, ATC is the preeminent professional theatre in the state of Arizona.

**To inspire, engage and entertain —  
one moment, one production,  
and one audience at a time.**

ATC shares the passion of the theatre through a wide array of outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives, and community events. Through its Student Matinee Series, ATC focuses on teaching Arizona's youth about literacy, cultural development, performing arts, and specialty techniques used onstage, opening their minds to the creative power of dramatic literature. ATC reaches far beyond the metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix, enriching the theatre learning experience for current and future audiences.



The Temple of Music and Art, the home of ATC shows in downtown Tucson - 330 S. Scott Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85701



Tempe Center for the Arts, ATC's performance venue in Tempe - 700 W. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe, AZ 85281



## THIS GUIDE IS YOURS TO USE

Feel free to customize and expand upon the content of this guide to best suit the unique needs and interests of your educational community. Copies of this guide can be made or downloaded from our website: [atc.org/education](http://atc.org/education).

Our goal is to provide you with the resources and support necessary to make your experience with Arizona Theatre Company enriching and rewarding.

- ATC Student Matinees and Study Guides are designed to meet specific educational objectives, including:

- Encouraging students to perceive and analyze artistic works, fostering critical thinking and observation skills.
- Guiding students in interpreting the intent and meaning behind artistic works, promoting deeper engagement with the material.
- Helping students relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural, and historical contexts, enhancing their understanding of the broader impact and significance of art.

We trust that these materials, along with our assistance, will empower you to create a valuable and meaningful learning experience during your time with Arizona Theatre Company.

## OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

### OVERVIEW: Ideas/Themes Presented in *Master Class*

- Artistic Passion & Dedication
- Struggles with Perfectionism
- Sacrifice & Endurance in Pursuit of Success
- The Power of Music to Evoke Emotion
- Teacher-Student Dynamics and Mentorship

### Educational Goals of this Study Guide:

- To provide context on the historical and cultural background of *Master Class*, focusing on the world of opera in the 1970s.
- To facilitate discussions and activities centered around the themes and ideas presented in the play.
- To offer insights into the process of staging and performing a theatrical production, highlighting the collaboration and creativity involved.
- To foster an appreciation for theater as an art form and a potential career path.

### Objectives for Students:

- To delve into the themes and concepts explored in *Master Class*, drawing connections to real-life experiences and personal reflections.

- To deepen their understanding of the theatrical craft and the complexities of character dynamics in dramatic performance.
- To engage with the Arizona Arts Standards, honing critical thinking, reading, writing, and artistic expression skills.
- To cultivate empathy by empathizing with the struggles and aspirations of the characters, recognizing the universal themes that resonate across time and culture.

By exploring the themes and nuances of *Master Class*, students will not only gain a deeper appreciation for the art of theater but also develop valuable skills in critical analysis, creative expression, and empathy. Through discussions, activities, and reflections, they will embark on a journey of discovery and enlightenment, exploring the profound impact of art and the human experience.



TUCSON: MARCH 2 - 23, 2024

TEMPE: MARCH 29 - APRIL 14, 2024

## ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY

**MATT AUGUST**

KASSER FAMILY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**GERI WRIGHT**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

VICKI LEWIS

IN

# MASTER CLASS

BY

**TERRENCE MCNALLY**

SCENIC DESIGNER

**EDWARD E. HAYNES JR.**

COSTUME DESIGNER

**FABIO TOBLINI**

LIGHTING DESIGNER

**Yael LUBETZKY**

SOUND DESIGNER

**MATHEW DEVORE**

STAGE MANAGER

**MOLLIE HEIL\***

CASTING

**MICHAEL DONOVAN CASTING**

**MICHAEL DONOVAN, CSA**

**RICHIE FERRIS, CSA**

MUSIC DIRECTOR

**WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY**

DIRECTED BY

**MARCIA MILGROM DODGE**

*MASTER CLASS* is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

*MASTER CLASS* was produced on Broadway by Robert Whitehead, Lewis Allen and Spring Sirkin.

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CORPORATE PRODUCTION SPONSOR: **RICHARD P. STAHL CHARITABLE FUND**

CORPORATE PRODUCTION SPONSOR: **RBC WEALTH MANAGEMENT**

PRODUCTION PARTNER: **TUCSON DESERT SONG FESTIVAL**

2023/2024 SEASON SPONSOR: **I. MICHAEL AND BETH KASSER**

2023/2024 CORPORATE SEASON SPONSOR: **LAVIDGE**



CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

ACCOMPANIST (MANNY) ..... WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY
MARIA CALLAS ..... VICKI LEWIS\*
FIRST SOPRANO (SOPHIE)..... RACHEL GOLD\*
STAGEHAND..... TRENT MILLS\*
SECOND SOPRANO (SHARON)..... KANISHA MARIE FELICIANO\*
TENOR (TONY)..... VICTOR RYAN ROBERTSON\*

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

UNDERSTUDIES

MARIA - KATHRYN KELLNER BROWN\*; FIRST SOPRANO (SOPHIE) AND SECOND SOPRANO (SHARON) - ANNALISE WEBB; TENOR (TONY) - TRENT MILLS; STAGEHAND - DENNIS TAMBLYN

Additional person: N/EI

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
ASHLEIGH DAVID

On this original Arizona Theatre Company production, the ATC Production Staff is responsible for scenic construction, costume construction, lighting, projections, sound, props, furniture, wigs, scene painting, and special effects.

Cell phones and other devices that make a noise or emit light can greatly disturb your fellow audience members and the performers. PLEASE TURN THEM OFF before the performance.

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Arizona Theatre Company operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States; Stage Directors and Choreographers, an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in these productions are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The Director and/or Choreographer is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.



Scenic, Costume, Lighting, and Sound in LORT Theatres are represented by Union Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



## SYNOPSIS

Mastery is a decision. A decision to endure the uncomfortable pains that come with the evolution to greatness. A decision to surrender your soul to the grueling fires of refinement. A life changing decision that will either breed lifelong happiness or deep-rooted regret. A decision only *you* can make. And when mastery does come, it does not come quietly. At least not for opera diva Maria Callas.

Inspired by the legendary masterclasses held at Juilliard, five-time Tony Award-winning playwright Terrence McNally unbars the doors to the ultimate course in what it takes to dominate the arts. Based on the woman whose talent reigns unparalleled in the opera world, McNally creates a stark image of the Callas classroom as she carefully critiques each of her eager-to-please students. Her rigor and excellence are evident and overpowering with each coaching session in which she finds moments to reflect on the whole of her career and the path she climbed to reach the top of her craft.

With no more than three people on the stage at a time, *Master Class* is practically a one woman show. We are forced, alongside her students, to pay attention to the exacting spirit that possesses Maria Callas and learn a thing or two.

Throughout the play, Callas experiences a series of flashbacks that take her through her illustrious career and emotional relationships. Her rise to fame, the pinnacle of her success, and the eventual decline intertwined with interactions with other aspiring singers evoke rich emotions and insights that allow the audience to witness the intricate layers of her personality.

McNally skillfully weaves together the past and present, allowing the audience to witness both the diva's glory days and the vulnerability hidden beneath her glamorous facade. He expands upon the biographical aspects of Callas's life while delving into an exploration of the human condition, artistic passion, and the sacrifices required for success. And yet, McNally manages to blend the

severity of meticulous training with witty and expertly timed comedic moments.

McNally's narrative artistry shines as he deftly intertwines the past and present, offering the audience a glimpse into both the soaring heights of the diva's career and the vulnerabilities concealed behind her glamorous facade. Through meticulous attention to biographical details, he illuminates Callas's journey, inviting reflection on the human condition, the unyielding pursuit of artistic passion, and the sacrifices demanded by the path to success.

What sets ATC's production apart is its heartfelt homage to opera's enchanting artistry. We revel in the beauty and potency of the human voice, experiencing firsthand its transformative power. Furthermore, amidst the intensity of Callas's rigorous coaching, McNally infuses the script with clever and well-timed comedic moments, striking a balance between profound introspection and light-hearted entertainment, making our production a truly unforgettable experience.

As Callas contemplates the lessons of her life, there is a clear fire within her to elevate her students to the fullness of their potential. Callas remarks in the play, "Try isn't good enough. Do. The theatre isn't about trying. People don't leave their home to watch us try. They come to see us do." So, every attempt that takes place in her classroom is almost instantaneously shut down. Keep in mind, these are students who have auditioned to be in her class and who have been hand selected by her. These are students that have experienced the inevitable influence of her excellence and hold her in the highest regard. And yet, there is no mercy. Either it is perfection, or it is nothing. But perfection comes at a price.

You might ask: How can a seemingly delicate and beautiful art form demand such rigor and sacrifice? We'll let Maria show you.



## YOU, THE LIVE THEATRE AUDIENCE

### Before the performance: preparing for the *Master Class* experience

#### Attending live theatre:

Before attending the performance of *Master Class*, engage your students in a discussion about theatre etiquette and the unique aspects of live theatre compared to other forms of entertainment. Consider the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What behaviors are considered acceptable at a live theatre performance?
- What behaviors are considered unacceptable?
- How can audience behavior positively influence a performance?
- How can audience behavior negatively impact a performance?
- Are there any other observations or points to consider?

#### Student matinee details:

The Student Matinee of *Master Class* will last approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes with a 15 in-termission and a Talk-Back with the cast.

#### Theatre etiquette:

Review the following theatre etiquette guidelines with your students to ensure a positive theatre experience for everyone:

- When the lights dim before the performance, it's time to settle in and focus on the *master class*.
- During the performance, maintain full attention and avoid talking, as whispers can be disruptive.
- Food and noisy snacks are not permitted in the theatre. Please dispose of them before entering.
- Turn off all electronic devices to avoid distractions during the performance.
- Avoid walking through the aisles during the show, as it can be disruptive to both performers and audience members.
- Take care of restroom and other needs before the show to minimize interruptions.

By preparing students with these guidelines and insights into the theatre experience, they will be ready to fully enjoy and appreciate the live performance of *Master Class*!

## REMEMBER WHY LIVE THEATRE IS SPECIAL

- Each LIVE performance is a unique and irreplaceable experience.
- LIVE performance fosters a shared sense of community between performers and the audience.
- In live theatre, there are no second chances or rewinds, so every moment counts.



## YOU, THE LIVE THEATRE AUDIENCE

### How to be an engaged live theatre audience

Attending a live theatre performance is a special experience that involves both the performers and the audience. Unlike watching television or movies, live theatre offers a unique interaction where actors can hear and feel the energy of the audience. To ensure everyone's enjoyment and respect for the performers, here are some guidelines to review with your class and chaperones before attending a performance:

- **Leave the snacks at home:** Please refrain from bringing food, drinks, candy, or gum into the theatre.
- **Use the railings:** Walk carefully in the theatre and use the railings when using the stairs.
- **Follow the ushers:** Ushers are available to assist you in finding your seats or locating restrooms. Take care of any bathroom needs before the show begins.
- **Quiet time:** While waiting for the performance to start, feel free to talk quietly. Once the show begins, it's time to focus on the stage.
- **Respect the seats:** Keep your feet off the seats and avoid stepping over seat backs.
- **No balcony antics:** Refrain from leaning over balcony railings or attempting to drop or throw anything from the balconies.
- **Silence your phone:** Turn off or silence all cell phones before the performance begins to avoid disruptions.
- **No recording during the show:** Photography and video recording are not permitted during the performance. However, you're welcome to take photos and selfies after the show. Don't forget to tag #ATC on social media!
- **Lights down, attention up:** When the lights dim for the performance, stop talking and direct your attention to the stage to fully enjoy the show.
- **Stay seated:** Remain in your seat throughout the performance to avoid disrupting others' viewing experience.
- **No rewinds:** Unlike movies, you can't rewind a live performance if you miss something, so listen and watch closely.
- **Show appreciation:** At the end of the performance, show your appreciation by applauding. Performers will typically bow as a sign of gratitude to the audience.
- **Participate in talk-backs:** If there's a talk-back after the performance, remain seated and be ready to engage respectfully. Raise your hand to ask a question, speak clearly, and listen attentively to others.
- **Exit etiquette:** When exiting the theatre, walk calmly and stick with your group to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment.

By following these guidelines, you'll not only enhance your own theatre experience but also contribute to the overall enjoyment of everyone in attendance. Let's make the most of our time together at the theatre!

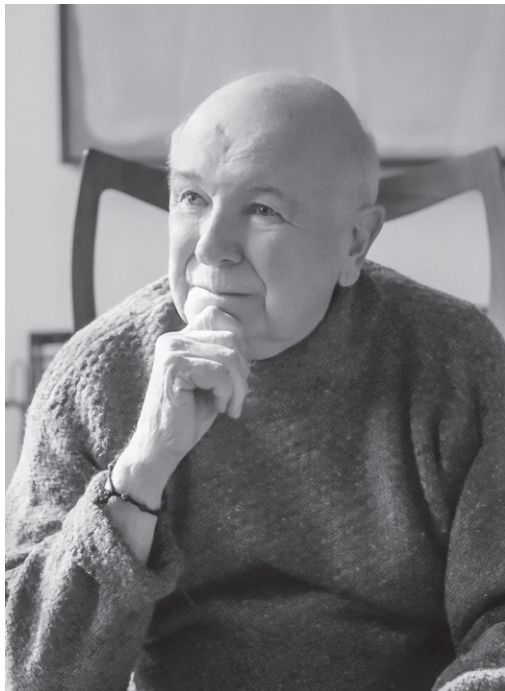


////// **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT: TERENCE McNALLY** /////

Terrence McNally was an American playwright, librettist, and LGBTQ+ trailblazer, described by the *New York Times* as “the bard of the American Theater.” One of the few playwrights of his generation to successfully pass from the avant-garde to mainstream acclaim, McNally redefined American playwriting for six decades and was the recipient of five Tony Awards: two for his plays *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and *Master Class*, two for the books to his musicals *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and *Ragtime*, and the 2019 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement. He received the 2011 Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award (he was Vice President of the Guild from 1981 to 2001), the 2015 Lucille Lortel Lifetime Achievement Award, a 1996 induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame, and, in 2018, an induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His other accolades include an Emmy Award (*Andre’s Mother*), two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Rockefeller Grant, four Drama Desk Awards, two Lucille Lortel Awards, two Obie Awards, and three Hull-Warriner Awards. McNally was an alumnus of Columbia University and received numerous honorary degrees, including from NYU and Juilliard, where he helped create the playwriting program in 1993. His legacy lives on in his plays, musicals, and operas that continue to be performed all over the world, as well as in his papers, which are kept and open to the public at the Harry Ransom Center in the University of Texas at Austin. [Terrencemcnallyfoundation.org](http://Terrencemcnallyfoundation.org)

**“Theatre changes hearts,  
that secret place where we all truly live...”**

— Terrence McNally  
2019 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement  
Acceptance Speech



Terrence McNally

**TONY AWARDS**

1993 – Best Book of a Musical  
*Kiss of the Spider Woman*

1995 – Best Play  
*Love! Valour! Compassion!*

1996 – Best Play  
*Master Class*

1998 – Best Book of a Musical  
*Ragtime*

2019 – Special Tony Award  
**Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre**



## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE: *MASTER CLASS*

After the performance, take the opportunity to reflect on your experience and share it with others:

- Capture the memories by taking pictures and selfies, and don't forget to tag #ATC when posting on social media!
- When you return home, share your insights about *Master Class* with your family and friends. Discuss the themes, characters, and the impact of live theatre.
- Describe the unique atmosphere of the Temple of Music and Art in Tucson or the Tempe Center for the Arts in Tempe, where you enjoyed the performance.
- Share your observations about the set, costumes, and props, and how they contributed to the storytelling.
- Encourage others to visit the ATC website at [atc.org](http://atc.org) to learn more about *Master Class* and upcoming productions.

We hope you had a wonderful time and that your experience with *Master Class* was both enjoyable and enlightening!

# Check Out ATC's Social Pages and Connect With Other Theatre Fans!



[Facebook.com/arizonatheatrecompany](https://www.facebook.com/arizonatheatrecompany)



[instagram.com/arizonatheatre](https://www.instagram.com/arizonatheatre)



[tiktok.com/@arizonatheatre](https://www.tiktok.com/@arizonatheatre)



[linkedin.com/company/arizonatheatrecompany](https://www.linkedin.com/company/arizonatheatrecompany)



[threads.net/@arizonatheatre](https://www.threads.net/@arizonatheatre)



[x/arizonatheatre](https://twitter.com/arizonatheatre)

## ATC.ORG / 833-ATC-SEAT

## ABOUT MASTER CLASS:

*Master Class* is a renowned play written by critically acclaimed playwright Terrence McNally. It made its debut in 1995 at the John Golden Theater in New York City. Set in the 1970s, the play presents a fictionalized account of opera masterclasses led by the real-life opera performer Maria Callas.

### **Characterization of Maria Callas:**

In the play, Maria Callas is depicted as a diva and a perfectionist who harshly critiques each of her young students auditioning for her masterclasses. Drawing inspiration from her own illustrious career, Maria demands excellence from her students, using her personal experiences in the opera world to guide and inspire them. Despite her acclaimed status as a singer, the play portrays Maria as a complex character with both admirable qualities and flaws.

### **Notable Performances and Awards:**

*Master Class* was initially directed by Leonard Foglia and featured Zoe Caldwell in the role of Maria Callas, with Audra McDonald portraying the first soprano Sharon De Palma. The play received widespread acclaim and went on to win several prestigious awards, including the Tony Award for Best Play and the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding New Play in 1996. Both Zoe Caldwell and Audra McDonald earned Tony Awards for their outstanding performances in the play.

### **Criticism and Controversy:**

Despite its success, *Master Class* faced criticism from both critics and fans for its portrayal of Maria Callas. Some argued that the play turned her into a parody, straying too far from the factual details of her life and career. Terrence McNally, the playwright, received backlash for his fictionalized interpretation of the legendary opera performer.

By incorporating this background information into the study guide, students will gain a better understanding of the historical context and artistic interpretation behind *Master Class*. They will be able to analyze the play's themes, characters, and performances more effectively as they engage with the text.



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT: MARIA CALLAS

### **Maria Callas: An Operatic Icon**

Maria Callas, hailed as the paramount dramatic soprano of her era, transcended boundaries in the world of opera. Born in New York City in 1923 to Greek parents, Callas's upbringing and heritage profoundly shaped her identity and career path.

Trained by soprano Elvira de Hidalgo at the Athens Conservatory, Callas made her operatic debut in 1941, portraying Tosca, a role that would become synonymous with her artistry. Her performances in Italy earned her widespread acclaim, highlighting her remarkable versatility across a repertoire spanning Wagner, Verdi, and Puccini.

Amidst her meteoric rise, Callas grappled with intense media scrutiny and rivalries within the opera sphere, notably with soprano Renata Tebaldi. Despite personal controversies, Callas's artistry remained unparalleled, captivating audiences with her emotive performances and unmatched vocal prowess.

In later years, Callas faced challenges, including vocal issues and personal setbacks. However, her enduring legacy is marked by her dedication to the art form and her influential master classes at Juilliard, where she imparted her expertise to aspiring singers, leaving an indelible mark on generations to come.

### ***Master Class's* Tribute to Opera:**

*Master Class*, a play by Terrence McNally, pays homage to the world of opera, celebrating its artistry, beauty, and transformative power. Through Maria Callas's meticulous coaching and impassioned performances, the audience is immersed in the sheer magic of operatic singing. Each aria becomes a testament to the extraordinary capabilities of the human voice, capable of expressing myriad emotions with unparalleled intensity and precision.

Moreover, *Master Class* underscores the transformative nature of music within the context of opera. As Callas guides her students through vocal

exercises and performances, we witness the profound impact that music has on both the singers and their audience. Music becomes a vehicle for self-expression, catharsis, and personal growth, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers to touch the hearts and souls of all who experience it.

### **Callas's Master Classes at Juilliard:**

Maria Callas conducted a series of twenty-three two-hour opera master classes at the Juilliard School of Music in New York from October 1971 to March 1972. Despite grappling with vocal challenges and personal anxieties, Callas used these classes to confront her fear of performing while imparting her knowledge to the next generation of singers.

In her classes, Callas maintained a strict atmosphere, emphasizing diligent work and dedication. While certain aspects of her interactions may have been dramatized, much of the advice she imparted aligned with the sentiments depicted in *Master Class*. Callas's preparation was meticulous, often singing earlier in the day to familiarize herself with the arias to be covered.

In her final class, Callas bid farewell, echoing sentiments akin to those depicted in *Master Class*. While the play dramatizes certain elements, its essence reflects the profound impact of Callas's master classes on both herself and her students.

### **Critical Overview:**

*Master Class* received widespread acclaim during its Broadway run from November 1995 to June 1997, amassing over six hundred performances. Terrence McNally's masterful storytelling and compelling portrayal of Callas's complex persona resonated with audiences, offering a captivating exploration of artistry, ambition, and the enduring power of music. *Master Class* delves into the lives of several characters, each contributing to the rich tapestry of the play's narrative:

## MEET THE CHARACTERS

**Maria Callas:** The central figure in *Master Class*, Maria Callas epitomizes the archetype of the diva – fiercely talented, uncompromisingly demanding, and haunted by her own past. As a renowned opera singer turned teacher, Callas imparts her wisdom and critiques with equal ferocity, driving her students to their limits while grappling with her own insecurities and vulnerabilities.

**Sophie de Palma:** The first soprano to audition for Callas’s master class, Sophie embodies youthful ambition tempered by a lack of experience. She faces Callas’s relentless criticism head-on, revealing her resilience and determination to succeed in the cutthroat world of opera.

**Sharon Graham:** The second soprano to audition, Sharon enters the master class with a mix of confidence and trepidation. Her interactions with Callas highlight the clash between youthful enthusiasm and seasoned expertise, as she navigates the challenges of performance under the scrutiny of a demanding mentor.

**Manny:** As Callas’s accompanist, Manny provides a steady presence amidst the tumult of the master class. His unwavering support and occasional comic relief offer moments of levity amid the intensity of Callas’s coaching.

**Anthony Candolini:** The sole tenor in the class, Anthony grapples with the weight of his own ambitions and the expectations placed upon him by Callas. His journey mirrors the struggles of artists striving for perfection while grappling with the harsh realities of their chosen profession.



Nximain Mokmnh and Bminow Ximinakon in *Master Class*. Photo by Tim Fuller.

## MASTER CLASS GLOSSARY

### **Accompanist:**

A musician who plays alongside or sings with another musician or vocalist, providing musical support during performances.

### **First Soprano:**

A vocalist, typically a woman, who sings in the highest pitch range. Young boys with high voices can also be sopranos.

### **Second Soprano:**

A vocalist who sings in a slightly lower range than the first soprano but can also reach the low notes of the altos. Sometimes referred to as a “mezzo-soprano.”

### **Tenor:**

The highest vocal range for a male voice, known for its rich and powerful sound.

### **Hermès Scarf:**

A luxurious square scarf made from silk, often associated with wealth and sophistication.

### **Basta:**

Italian or Spanish for “enough” or “stop!” Used to indicate the end of a performance or to halt an action.

### **Conservatory:**

An institution for the study of classical music, providing intensive training and education in music theory and performance.

### **Subjugate:**

To bring something or someone under control or dominance, often through force or authority.

### **Covent Garden:**

An area in the West End of London renowned for its entertainment, dining, shopping, and the prestigious Royal Opera House.

### **Comme Il-Faut:**

French for “properly” or “according to custom,” implying correct behavior or etiquette.

### **Götterdämmerung:**

A German term meaning “twilight of the gods,” originating from Richard Wagner’s opera “Der Ring des Nibelungen.” It refers to a catastrophic collapse of an institution, society, or regime.

### **Carmen:**

A famous French opera composed by Georges Bizet, known for its captivating story and vibrant musical score.

### **Franco Zeffirelli:**

A celebrated Italian film and opera producer/director, renowned for his visually stunning productions of operas such as “La Traviata,” “Don Giovanni,” and “Tosca,” as well as films like “Romeo and Juliet” and “The Taming of the Shrew.”

### **Va Bene:**

Italian for “okay” or “all right,” used to express agreement or approval.

### **Recitativo/Recitative:**

A style of singing in which the text is delivered in a speech-like manner, allowing for the clear communication of the lyrics.

### **Avanti:**

Italian for “forward,” used to encourage movement or progress, as in “step forward” or “come forward.”

### **Tutto Insieme:**

Italian for “all together,” indicating that all elements should be performed simultaneously or coordinated in unison.

### **Tosca:**

A renowned Italian opera composed by Giacomo Puccini, known for its dramatic storyline and memorable arias.

### **Dissonance:**

A lack of harmony or agreement, particularly in musical notes, resulting in a sense of tension or unease in the sound.

## ACTIVITY: OPERA GLOSSARY COMMERCIAL CHALLENGE

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of opera vocabulary from the *Master Class* glossary by creating and performing commercials that display the meaning and relevance of selected terms.

### Materials Needed:

- *Master Class* glossary
- Writing materials
- Props and costumes (optional)

### Procedure:

**Introduction (5 minutes):** Begin by explaining the activity and its objectives. Emphasize that students will use their knowledge of opera terminology to create engaging commercials that demonstrate the meaning and significance of selected terms from the *Master Class* glossary.

**Vocabulary Selection (10 minutes):** Provide each student or group of students with a copy of the *Master Class* glossary. Instruct them to review the list of terms and choose three to five terms that they find interesting or challenging.

**Commercial Planning (20 minutes):** Divide the class into small groups and assign each group their selected terms. Give students time to brainstorm ideas for commercials that creatively illustrate the meanings of their chosen terms. Encourage them to consider using humor, drama, or catchy slogans to make their commercials memorable.

**Script Writing (15 minutes):** Once the groups have brainstormed their ideas, instruct them to write a script for their commercial. The script should include dialogue, actions, and any props or costumes they plan to use during the performance. Encourage students to incorporate their chosen terms' definitions into the dialogue clearly and engagingly.

**Commercial Rehearsal (20 minutes):** Allow time for each group to rehearse their commercial. Encourage them to practice their lines, timing, and delivery to ensure a polished performance. Offer feedback and guidance as needed to help students refine their commercials.

**Commercial Performances (30 minutes):** Have each group perform their commercial for the class. After each

performance, facilitate a brief discussion where students analyze how effectively the commercial conveyed the meaning of the chosen terms. Encourage constructive feedback from the audience to help groups improve their presentations.

**Reflection (10 minutes):** Conclude the activity with a reflection where students discuss their experience creating and performing their commercials. Ask them to reflect on what they learned about opera terminology and how it relates to *Master Class*. Encourage students to share any challenges they encountered and how they overcame them.

### Accommodations:

**Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids such as posters or flashcards displaying opera terms and their definitions. This will assist visual learners in understanding and retaining the vocabulary.

**Peer Collaboration:** Pair students with diverse learning needs together, allowing them to support each other during the activity. Students can take on different roles within their groups based on their strengths and abilities.

**Modified Assignments:** For students who may struggle with writing or verbal communication, offer modified assignments such as creating visual storyboards or using assistive technology to generate ideas and express their understanding. **Extended Time:** Allow students who need more time to complete tasks to work at their own pace during the activity's planning and rehearsal stages. This will ensure they have enough time to fully engage with the material and contribute to the group effort.

**Alternative Presentations:** Offer alternative ways for students to present their commercials, such as using puppets or creating audio recordings. This accommodates different learning styles and allows students to display their understanding in ways that align with their strengths.

**Extension:** To extend the activity, students can create multimedia presentations of their commercials using video recording or presentation software. They can also research famous operas or composers associated with the terms from the glossary and incorporate this information into their commercials.

## MASTER CLASS IMAGERY

### Pain:

Maria vividly illustrates the demanding journey of becoming an opera singer, intertwining success with the endurance of pain. She recounts walking until her feet bled, equating physical discomfort with the challenges of mastering opera singing. Maria asserts that success requires more than just hitting notes—it demands a profound emotional investment.

### Music:

Music is central to *Master Class*, reflecting Maria's dedication to her craft. She emphasizes infusing

music with raw emotion, repeatedly stressing the need for “feeling, feeling, feeling.” Maria critiques her students for lacking emotional resonance, highlighting the inseparable link between music and authentic expression.

### Cruelty:

McNally portrays Maria's teaching style as uncompromising and harshly critical. Despite her success, Maria's approach is characterized by stringent expectations and occasional insensitivity. She singles out performers for critique and interrupts their renditions, revealing her uncompromising nature as an instructor.

## MASTER CLASS IRONY

### The Master

Although Maria presents herself as a master and teacher of opera, she still has many things to learn. In the play, she is depicted as very critical and a bit of a diva; she then realizes she should be kinder towards her students to help them progress.

### Teacher vs. student

Maria is the teacher-figure in this play, and it is her job to teach her students about her profession. However, in the end it is ironically Maria herself who learns something.

### Top of her profession

Maria is shown to be at the top of her profession and is even in a position where she is able

to teach others about her experiences. However, she is ironically presented as a cruel and unkind character.

### Maria's tips

Maria advises her students to find an emotional connection with their performance. In order to do this, they must truly know themselves. Ironically, looking deep within themselves produces the ability to transcend oneself and perform, according to Maria.

### Teaching style

Although Maria is being harsh because she wants her students to grow and become successful, she is ironically alienating them due to her forceful teaching style.



## ////// MASTER CLASS METAPHORS AND SIMILES: ////

- **A stab of pain:** Maria employs a metaphor to articulate her expectations from her singers, stating, “It’s not a note we’re after here... It’s a stab of pain.”
- **Bleeding feet:** Maria recounts a personal anecdote of walking barefoot until her feet bled, symbolizing the discipline and resilience required for success in opera singing.
- **Stage directions:** Maria metaphorically describes Lady Macbeth’s singing through stage directions, illustrating it as “a cracked and broken voice. A voice in ruins.”
- **Pain and performance:** Maria frequently uses pain as a metaphor to underscore the endurance necessary for success, emphasizing the sacrifices inherent in pursuing a career in opera singing.
- **Maria:** Maria serves as a metaphor for the ongoing journey of mastery, highlighting that even those who excel in their craft have room for growth and learning. Despite her prowess in opera, Maria’s character reveals the complexities of expertise and teaching.

## ////// MASTER CLASS NOTABLE QUOTES: ////

- **“Feeling, feeling, feeling.”** - Maria emphasizes the importance of emotion in singing, suggesting that true artistry goes beyond technical proficiency to convey genuine emotion and meaning.
- **“It’s not a note we’re after here... It’s a stab of pain.”** - Maria expresses her belief that opera demands more than just technical precision; it requires singers to evoke deep emotion, often through personal sacrifice and dedication.
- **“So. How is everyone? Can you hear me? I don’t believe in microphones. Singing is first of all about projection. So is speech. People are forgetting how to listen. They want everything blasted at them. Listening takes concentration. If you can’t hear me, it’s your fault. You’re not concentrating.”** - Maria’s remarks reflect her authoritative teaching style, emphasizing the importance of projection and concentration in both singing and listening. While she demonstrates expertise, her tone also carries a hint of condescension and pretentiousness.

# PROJECT-BASED LESSON: EXPLORING IRONY IN *MASTER CLASS*

## Objective:

Students will analyze instances of irony in *Master Class* and create multimedia presentations to display their understanding of irony in the play.

## Materials Needed:

- Excerpts from *Master Class* by Terrence McNally
- Multimedia presentation tools (e.g., PowerPoint, Google Slides, video editing software)
- Writing materials
- Visual aids (optional)

## Lesson Outline:

### Introduction (15 minutes):

Begin by discussing the concept of irony in literature. Explain that irony occurs when there is a contrast between what is expected and what happens.

Provide examples of irony from familiar stories or media to illustrate different types of irony, such as situational, verbal, or dramatic irony.

### Reading Excerpts (20 minutes):

Distribute selected excerpts from *Master Class* that contain instances of irony to students.

Instruct students to read the excerpts individually and identify examples of irony within the text.

Encourage students to annotate the excerpts to highlight instances of irony and make notes about their interpretations.

### Project Planning (20 minutes):

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different excerpt to analyze in depth.

Provide project guidelines and discuss the various multimedia presentation options available (e.g., PowerPoint slides, video clips, audio recordings).

Have each group brainstorm ideas for their presentation, considering how they will visually represent the ironic elements of the excerpt and explain their significance.

### Project Development (40 minutes):

Allow students time to work collaboratively on their multimedia presentations.

Encourage students to incorporate visuals, text, and audio elements to effectively convey the ironic moments from *Master Class*.

Circulate among the groups to provide guidance, answer questions, and ensure that each group stays on task.



# PROJECT-BASED LESSON: EXPLORING IRONY IN *MASTER CLASS*

## **Presentation Preparation (15 minutes):**

Review the presentation requirements and provide feedback to each group on their progress.

Encourage students to practice their presentations and make any necessary revisions before the final presentation day.

## **Presentation Day (30 minutes):**

Have each group present their multimedia project to the class.

Allow time for questions and feedback from classmates after each presentation.

Facilitate a brief discussion at the end of the presentations to reflect on common themes and insights about irony in *Master Class*.

## **Advanced Learners:**

Encourage advanced learners to delve into nuanced forms of irony, such as cosmic or structural irony, and integrate them into their presentations.

Provide enriched resources or supplementary readings on irony in literature to challenge advanced learners and foster deeper analysis and discussion.

## **Differentiated Support:**

Offer simplified excerpts or audio recordings of the text to support students with diverse learning needs or reading challenges.

Provide visual aids or structured graphic organizers to assist students in organizing their ideas and planning their multimedia presentations.

Pair students with diverse learning profiles to foster collaboration and peer support during project development, promoting an inclusive learning environment.

## **Extensions:**

Invite students to present their projects to other classes or during a school-wide event to share their insights about irony in *Master Class* with a broader audience.

Explore interdisciplinary connections by integrating elements of music, drama, or visual arts into the presentations to deepen students' understanding of irony across different contexts.

Encourage students to explore additional layers of analysis, such as character development or thematic exploration, to enhance the depth and complexity of their presentations.

# PROJECT-BASED LESSON:

## EXPLORING METAPHORS & SIMILES

### Objective:

Students will analyze metaphors and similes in *Master Class* to understand their symbolic significance and how they contribute to character development and thematic exploration.

### Materials Needed:

- Excerpts from *Master Class* by Terrence McNally
- Writing materials
- Visual aids (optional)

### Lesson Outline:

#### Introduction (15 minutes):

Define metaphors and similes for students, providing examples of each to ensure understanding.

Explain the importance of metaphors and similes in literature, highlighting their ability to convey deeper meanings and evoke imagery.

#### Reading Excerpts (20 minutes):

Distribute selected excerpts from *Master Class* containing metaphors and similes to students.

Instruct students to read the excerpts individually and identify instances of metaphors and similes within the text.

Encourage students to consider the context of each metaphor or simile and discuss its symbolic significance.

#### Group Analysis (30 minutes):

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different excerpt to analyze in depth.

Have groups discuss the metaphors and similes in their assigned excerpt, considering how they contribute to character development, thematic exploration, and overall meaning.

Encourage groups to share their findings with the class, discussing the effectiveness of the metaphors and similes in conveying complex ideas and emotions.

#### Class Discussion (20 minutes):

Facilitate a class discussion on the significance of metaphors and similes in *Master Class*.

Encourage students to explore the recurring themes and motifs represented by the metaphors and similes in the play.

Discuss how metaphors and similes contribute to the audience's understanding of Maria as a character and the broader themes of the play, such as sacrifice, discipline, and the pursuit of excellence.

# PROJECT-BASED LESSON: EXPLORING METAPHORS & SIMILIES

## Writing Activity (25 minutes):

Ask students to choose one metaphor or simile from *Master Class* that resonated with them the most.

Instruct students to write a brief analysis explaining the symbolic significance of their chosen metaphor or simile and how it contributes to their interpretation of the play.

Encourage students to provide textual evidence to support their analysis and articulate their insights clearly.

## Reflection and Conclusion (10 minutes):

Conclude the lesson with a brief reflection on the importance of metaphors and similes in literature and their impact on storytelling and characterization.

Invite students to share their thoughts on how analyzing metaphors and similes has deepened their understanding of *Master Class* and enriched their appreciation of the play's themes and characters.

## Advanced Learners:

Challenge advanced learners to explore the use of extended metaphors or intricate similes in *Master Class* and analyze their layered meanings and implications.

Provide additional excerpts or supplementary readings on metaphorical language in literature for advanced analysis and discussion.

## Differentiated Support:

Offer simplified excerpts or audio recordings of the text to support students with diverse learning needs or reading challenges.

Provide visual aids or graphic organizers to assist students in identifying and analyzing metaphors and similes in the text.

Pair students with diverse learning profiles to foster collaboration and peer support during group analysis activities, promoting an inclusive learning environment.

## Extensions:

Invite students to create their own metaphors or similes inspired by *Master Class* and incorporate them into original creative writing pieces or dramatic interpretations of the play.

Encourage students to explore the use of metaphors and similes in other works of literature or art and compare them to those found in *Master Class* to deepen their understanding of metaphorical language across different contexts.

Challenge students to analyze the cultural and historical significance of specific metaphors or similes in *Master Class* and how they reflect broader themes or societal attitudes.



# LESSON PLAN:

## MARIA'S TEACHING STYLE & IT'S IMPACT

### Objective:

Students will analyze notable quotes from *Master Class* to understand Maria's teaching philosophy and its effects on her students.

### Activities:

#### Discussion: Understanding Maria's Quotes (30 minutes):

Present each quote to the class and encourage students to share their interpretations.

Discuss the significance of each quote in relation to Maria's teaching approach and the themes of the play.

Prompt students to consider how Maria's beliefs about singing and teaching influence her interactions with her students.

#### Character Analysis: Maria Callas (40 minutes)

Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of Maria's quotes.

Instruct students to analyze their assigned quote in the context of Maria's character traits, motivations, and teaching style.

Have each group present their analysis to the class, discussing Maria's personality and the impact of her words on her students.

#### Reflection and Discussion: Maria's Impact on Students (20 minutes)

Lead a class discussion on how Maria's teaching style affects her students' learning experiences and personal growth.

Encourage students to reflect on the effectiveness of Maria's approach and its ethical implications.

Prompt students to consider alternative teaching methods that may have different impacts on student learning and morale.

#### Accommodations and Extensions:

**Advanced Learners:** Provide additional quotes from the play for advanced learners to analyze, encouraging deeper exploration of Maria's character and the thematic complexities of the text.

**Students with Diverse Learning Needs:** Offer simplified versions of the quotes and provide visual aids to support comprehension. Allow extra time for discussion and encourage students to express their thoughts through written or artistic expression.

**Extension Activity:** Have students write a reflective essay exploring their own beliefs about teaching and learning, drawing parallels between Maria's approach and their own experiences as students or mentors. This activity can be adjusted based on individual learning styles and needs.

## ////// SYMBOLS, ALLEGORY, AND MOTIFS: ////

### **The Students:**

The students symbolize aspiring artists striving for excellence in their craft. They represent dedication and ambition, eager to learn and grow under Maria's guidance. However, they also serve as targets for Maria's harsh critiques, highlighting the challenges and sacrifices inherent in pursuing artistic mastery.

### **Feeling:**

Feeling serves as a central motif in Maria's teaching philosophy, emphasizing the importance of emotional connection in music. Maria insists that true musical expression is fueled by genuine emotion, criticizing her students when they fail to convey depth and authenticity in their performances.

### **Microphones:**

Microphones serve as a symbol of artificiality and inauthenticity in music. Maria rejects their use, viewing them as a crutch that undermines genuine musical skill and expression. By eschewing microphones, Maria emphasizes the importance of projection and natural vocal ability in true artistic performance.

### **Pain and Success:**

Throughout *Master Class*, Maria associates success in opera with personal sacrifice and endurance. She uses anecdotes of her own struggles, such as walking barefoot during wartime, to illustrate the rigorous discipline required for artistic achievement. This motif underscores the idea that true mastery often entails overcoming obstacles and embracing discomfort.

### **Maria:**

Maria embodies the dualities of the dedicated artist and the demanding diva. As a renowned opera singer, she represents artistic excellence and authority, commanding respect from her students and the crew. However, her perfectionism and exacting standards also reveal her diva-like tendencies, showcasing the complexity of artistic temperament and the challenges of mentorship.

# MASTER CLASS

## SYMBOLISM DISCUSSION & ACTIVITY

**OBJECTIVE:**

To explore and analyze the symbols, allegories, and motifs present in *Master Class* and their significance in the play.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of relevant excerpts from the play (if available)
- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers
- Notebooks or paper for students

**Activity Steps:**

**Introduction (5 minutes):**

Briefly introduce the concept of symbolism, allegory, and motifs in literature and drama. Explain that these elements can add depth and layers of meaning to a text.

**Group Reading (10 minutes):**

Divide students into small groups and provide each group with a short excerpt from *Master Class* that contains significant symbolism or motifs (e.g., Maria’s monologue about feeling, the scene involving microphones, etc.).

Instruct each group to read the excerpt together and identify any symbols, allegories, or motifs present in the passage. Encourage them to discuss the possible meanings and implications of these literary elements.

**Group Discussion (15 minutes):**

Bring the groups back together and discuss the symbols, allegories, and motifs identified in their excerpts.

Guide the discussion with prompts such as:

What symbols did you notice in your excerpt, and what do you think they represent?

How do these symbols contribute to the overall themes or messages of the play?

Do you see any patterns or recurring motifs throughout the text?

How do the symbols and motifs help develop the characters or advance the plot?

**Symbolism Chart (10 minutes):**

As a class, create a symbolism chart on the whiteboard or flip chart, listing the symbols, allegories, and motifs discussed during the activity.

Encourage students to contribute their insights and interpretations to the chart.

**Reflection (5 minutes):**

Conclude the activity with a brief reflection period where students can share their thoughts on what they learned about symbolism in *Master Class* and how it enhances their understanding of the play.

**Extension:**

To extend the activity, students can individually write short essays or paragraphs analyzing a specific symbol or motif from the play in more depth, citing textual evidence to support their interpretations. Alternatively, they could create visual representations or multimedia presentations highlighting the symbols and motifs they explored.





## MASTER CLASS ESSAY QUESTIONS

Instructions: Choose one of the following essay prompts and write a well-developed essay in response. Your essay should demonstrate a clear understanding of the play *Master Class* by Terrence McNally and incorporate evidence and examples from the text to support your arguments.

- Why does Maria eschew the use of microphones in her teaching?
- How is the play structured, and what is the recurring pattern within its acts?
- What instances illustrate Maria's diva-like demeanor throughout the play?

Note: Ensure to provide thorough analysis and textual evidence to support your arguments.

## MASTER CLASS THEMES

### Commitment

In *Master Class*, the theme of commitment is central to the narrative, highlighting the arduous journey of an artist striving for perfection in their craft. Maria, the protagonist, emphasizes to aspiring opera singers the demanding nature of their profession, characterized by both moments of triumph and disappointment. She underscores the necessity for unwavering dedication, asserting that true excellence requires giving one's all without reservation. Maria likens the pursuit of art to a lifelong commitment akin to marriage, where there is no room for half-hearted efforts. For opera singers, their craft demands continual refinement, and they must choose to either fully embrace it or not pursue it at all.

### Emotional Struggles

A prominent theme in *Master Class* is the exploration of emotional struggles inherent in artistic expression. Maria insists that singers must not only convey genuine emotion but also internalize it completely. She admonishes them to immerse themselves fully in their characters, emphasizing that authentic performances stem from deeply felt experiences. Maria challenges her students to confront real-life emotions of pain, joy, and suffering, asserting that these personal encounters enrich their on-stage portrayal. By delving into their own emotional depths, singers can infuse their performances with authenticity and resonance.

### Imagination

The theme of imagination is underscored by Maria's insistence on the power of creativity in performance. She encourages singers to tap into their imagination to evoke emotions they may not have personally experienced. Maria contends that great performers possess the ability to inhabit any character convincingly, transcending their own reality to embody the essence of a musical piece. However, she emphasizes that this goes beyond mere acting; it requires the capacity to transport oneself into uncharted emotional territory and fully embody the essence of the music.

# ACTIVITY

## EXPLORATION THROUGH PERFORMANCE

### Objective:

To deepen understanding of the themes of commitment, emotional struggles, and imagination in *Master Class* through creative performance.

### Instructions:

- **Group Formation:** Divide the students into small groups of 3-4 members each.
- **Theme Selection:** Assign each group one of the three themes - commitment, emotional struggles, or imagination - from *Master Class*.
- **Brainstorming:** In their groups, students should discuss and brainstorm ideas on how to effectively convey their assigned theme through a short skit or performance. Encourage them to consider specific scenes, dialogues, or situations from the play that exemplify the theme.
- **Script Writing:** Based on their brainstorming session, each group should write a script for a one-minute skit that vividly illustrates their assigned theme. The skit should be engaging, clear, and demonstrate a deep understanding of the theme.
- **Rehearsal:** Allow time for groups to rehearse their skits, focusing on dialogue delivery, character portrayal, and overall performance quality.
- **Performance:** After adequate rehearsal time, each group should perform their skit for the class. Encourage students to incorporate elements of drama, emotion, and creativity into their performances.
- **Reflection:** Following each performance, facilitate a brief discussion where students analyze how effectively the theme was conveyed. Encourage them to identify specific moments or lines from the skit that displayed the theme and discuss the impact of these elements on the audience.
- **Peer Feedback:** Conclude the activity by providing an opportunity for peer feedback. Each group can offer constructive feedback to other groups, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement in their skits.

### Extension:

To further enhance the activity, students can create accompanying visual aids, such as posters or slides, to reinforce the theme portrayed in their skits. Additionally, they can write reflective essays discussing their creative process and insights gained from exploring the themes of *Master Class* through performance.

## MASTER CLASS LITERARY ELEMENTS

- **Genre:** Drama infused with elements of biography and performance art.
- **Language:** Written and performed in English, capturing the essence of the opera world.
- **Setting and Context:** Transported to a dynamic opera lesson in the vibrant 1970s, pulsating with the energy of New York City.
- **Narrator and Point of View:** The narrative unfolds through the lens of a perceptive third-person omniscient narrator, delving into the intricacies of Maria Callas's world.
- **Tone and Mood:** The tone crackles with tension and authority, while the mood oscillates between the dramatic allure of opera and the intense emotions stirred by Maria's teachings.
- **Protagonist and Antagonist:** Maria Callas stands as the formidable protagonist, with her opera students embodying the challenging antagonists in her quest for perfection.
- **Major Conflict:** The pivotal conflict arises during Maria's interaction with Sophie, her first student, as Maria's unyielding critique leads to emotional turmoil and tears.
- **Climax:** The climax unfolds in the second act, marked by Maria's surprising reversal in attitude towards the Accompanist, displaying the depth of her character and teaching philosophy.
- **Foreshadowing:** The students' struggles foreshadow deeper insights into Maria's own tumultuous journey within the opera world, hinting at the layers of complexity beneath her tough exterior.
- **Understatement:** The profound impact of Maria's criticism is subtly underscored throughout the play, revealing layers of vulnerability and resilience within her students.
- **Allusions:** Rich with allusions to the legendary life and performances of Maria Callas, weaving a tapestry of operatic lore and real-world drama.
- **Paradox:** Maria's dual role as a mentor striving for constructive feedback while employing brutal honesty creates a compelling paradox, reflecting the intricate balance between mentorship and artistic pursuit.
- **Parallelism:** Mirroring the crescendos and diminuendos of operatic highs, Maria's fervent desire for her students to share her passion creates a poignant parallel, illuminating the timeless allure of the opera stage.
- **Use of Dramatic Devices:** The masterful use of dramatic monologue provides a window into Maria's innermost thoughts, amplifying the emotional resonance and intensity of her teachings.

# MASTER CLASS

## UNVEILING THE LITERARY TAPESTRY

### Objective:

Students will analyze the literary elements present in *Master Class*, including genre, tone, conflict, and symbolism, and present their findings through group presentations to deepen their understanding of the play and its themes.

**Duration: 60 minutes**

### Materials Needed:

- Copies of *Master Class* script or access to digital version
- Whiteboard and markers
- Printed glossary of literary terms (optional)
- Writing materials for students

### Activity Steps:

#### Introduction (10 minutes):

Begin by discussing the concept of literary elements and their significance in understanding a piece of literature.

Present an overview of the key literary elements to be explored in *Master Class*, such as genre, tone, conflict, and symbolism.

Explain that students will work in small groups to analyze specific sections of the play and prepare presentations to share their findings with the class.

#### Group Assignment (5 minutes):

Divide the class into small groups, assigning each group a specific section of *Master Class* to analyze. Sections should focus on different scenes or chapters of the play. Provide each group with a set of guiding questions related to the assigned section and remind them to consider literary elements such as genre, tone, conflict, and symbolism in their analysis.

#### Group Work (25 minutes):

Allow groups time to read and analyze their assigned sections of the play, using the guiding questions to guide their discussion.

Encourage groups to take notes on key literary elements, textual evidence, and their interpretations of the significance of these elements within their assigned sections.

#### Group Presentations (15 minutes):

Invite each group to present their findings to the class, focusing on the literary elements present in their assigned sections.

Encourage groups to use visual aids, such as slideshows or posters, to enhance their presentations and engage their classmates.

After each presentation, facilitate a brief discussion where students can ask questions or offer feedback on their peers' analyses.

#### Reflection and Discussion (5 minutes):

Conclude the lesson with a brief reflection period where students can share their thoughts on the presentations and what they learned about the literary elements of *Master Class*.

Encourage students to consider how their understanding of the play has deepened through the group presentations and discussions.

#### Interventions and Accommodations:

Provide additional support or clarification to students who may struggle with understanding the assigned sections or identifying literary elements.

Offer differentiated tasks or assignments for students with varying learning needs, such as providing simplified guiding questions or allowing extra time for analysis.

Encourage peer collaboration and support by pairing students with different abilities during group work activities.

Ensure that visual aids used during presentations are accessible to all students, such as providing large-print materials or audio descriptions for visually impaired students.

#### Extension Activity (Optional):

For an extended activity, students can create a collaborative analysis document where they compile their group findings and interpretations of *Master Class*. This document can serve as a reference for further discussions and reflections on the play's literary elements.

## REMEMBER WHY LIVE THEATRE IS SPECIAL

- Each LIVE performance is a unique and irreplaceable experience.
- LIVE performance fosters a shared sense of community between performers and the audience.
- In live theatre, there are no second chances or rewinds, so every moment counts.



Nximain Mokmnh in Master Class. Photo by Tim Fuller.

Nximain Mokmnh in Master Class. Photo by Tim Fuller.

# ACTIVITY

## THE DISRUPTIVE AUDIENCE MEMBER

### **Objective:**

Students will learn about appropriate audience behavior through an interactive activity simulating disruptive conduct from both performer and audience perspectives.

### **Activity Steps:**

#### **Introduction:**

Discuss the significance of respectful audience behavior in enhancing the theatre experience.

Explain how proper etiquette benefits both performers and fellow audience members.

#### **Interactive Demonstration:**

Select one or two volunteers to be “performers” presenting to the class.

Instruct the rest of the class to act as the “audience,” maintaining quiet, attentive, and respectful behavior.

#### **Teacher’s Role:**

Briefly exit the room and re-enter as a “bad” audience member, exhibiting disruptive behaviors like loud talking, gum chewing, or cellphone use.

#### **Class Discussion:**

After the “performance,” ask students to identify the disruptive behaviors they observed.

Lead a discussion on the impact of these behaviors on concentration, enjoyment, and engagement.

### **Reflection:**

Invite the “performers” to share their experiences during the disruptive behavior.

Encourage “audience” members to express their feelings and reactions to the disruptions.

### **Debrief and Key Takeaways:**

Emphasize the importance of respectful audience conduct in creating a positive theatre atmosphere.

Discuss how empathy and consideration for others enhance the overall theatre experience.

### **Post-Theater Reflection:**

After attending a theatre show with the class, revisit the discussion on audience behavior.

Encourage students to reflect on their own conduct during the performance and its impact on their enjoyment.

### **Conclusion:**

This interactive activity provides students with a firsthand understanding of the effects of disruptive behavior in the theatre. By experiencing both perspectives, students gain insight into the importance of practicing proper theatre etiquette for a respectful and enjoyable experience for all.

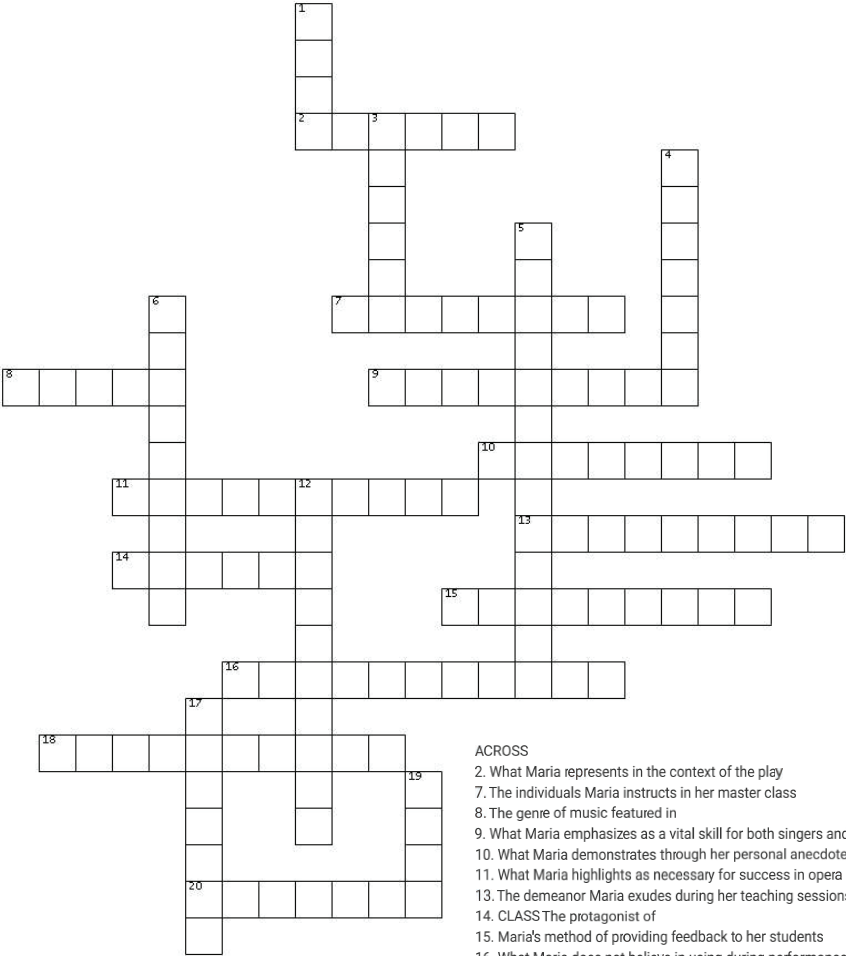


## ////// AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE CHECKLIST ////

Sometimes it is hard to know what appropriate behavior is in each setting. Please mark with an X the setting columns where the behavior is acceptable.

BEHAVIOR/ SETTING	SPORTING EVENT	MOVIE THEATER	LIVE THEATRE	ROCK CONCERT	JAZZ CONCERT	ORCHESTRA CONCERT	BALLET	OPERA	SCHOOL SHOWS
Eating or drinking food that is noisy or has a strong smell									
Talking or whispering during performance									
Cheering, hooting, shouting or whistling									
Standing up and walking around during performance									
Applauding or giving a standing ovation at the end									
Clapping along or singing along with the music									

MASTER CLASS CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 2. What Maria represents in the context of the play
- 7. The individuals Maria instructs in her master class
- 8. The genre of music featured in
- 9. What Maria emphasizes as a vital skill for both singers and audiences
- 10. What Maria demonstrates through her personal anecdotes
- 11. What Maria highlights as necessary for success in opera
- 13. The demeanor Maria exudes during her teaching sessions
- 14. CLASS The protagonist of
- 15. Maria's method of providing feedback to her students
- 16. What Maria does not believe in using during performances

DOWN

- 1. Maria's personality trait often attributed to her
- 3. What Maria believes is not the only requirement for success in opera
- 4. What Maria emphasizes her students must convey in their singing
- 5. What Maria believes is lacking in audiences today
- 6. The type of music Maria teaches her students
- 12. The standard Maria holds her students to
- 17. The role Maria Callas takes on during the play
- 19. Maria associates success in opera singing with this



# ACTIVITY

## EMBRACING CHALLENGES

### Objective:

To encourage students to embrace challenges and understand the value of perseverance and hard work in achieving goals, inspired by a quote from the play *Master Class* by Terrence McNally.

### Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard or chart paper
- Markers
- Printed copies of the quote “Of course it’s hard. It’s supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everybody would do it. Hard is what makes it great.”

### Accommodations:

For students with visual impairments, provide the quote in large print or use assistive technology for reading.

Provide a quiet space or allow extra time for students who may need breaks during the activity.

Offer alternative means of communication for students with speech or language difficulties, such as written responses or peer support.

### Activity Steps:

#### Introduction (5 minutes):

Begin by introducing the quote from *Master Class* by Terrence McNally. Explain that the quote is spoken by Maria Callas, a renowned opera singer, during a master class where she is coaching aspiring singers.

Discuss the significance of the quote with the class. Ask students what they think the quote means and how it relates to their own experiences.

#### Reading and Analysis (10 minutes):

Provide students with printed copies of the quote and ask them to read it silently.

Lead a brief discussion about the context in which Maria Callas says this quote in the play. Explain that Maria is emphasizing the challenges and difficulties inherent in pursuing a career in opera, and the importance of perseverance in overcoming those challenges.

### Personal Reflection (15 minutes):

Have students reflect individually on a time when they faced a difficult challenge in their lives. It could be related to sports, academics, arts, or any other aspect.

Encourage them to write about how they felt during the challenge, what strategies they used to overcome it, and what they learned from the experience considering Maria Callas’s quote.

### Sharing and Discussion (15 minutes):

Divide the class into small groups and have each student share their experience with their group members.

Facilitate a group discussion by asking questions such as:

How does Maria Callas’s quote relate to the challenges you’ve faced?

What similarities do you see between your experiences and those of the aspiring opera singers in *Master Class*?

How can the lessons from Maria Callas’s quote be applied to your current goals and aspirations?

### Application (15 minutes):

Bring the class back together and discuss how the experiences shared relate to the quote from *Master Class*.

Guide students to draw connections between their personal experiences and Maria Callas’s message about the importance of facing challenges to achieve greatness.

Encourage students to apply the lessons learned to their current goals and aspirations, using Maria Callas’s quote as inspiration. Accommodations:

### Extensions:

Have students create a visual representation of the quote using art materials such as markers, paint, or collage.

Ask students to research and share stories of famous individuals who faced significant challenges on their path to success, drawing parallels between their experiences and those of the characters in *Master Class*. Discuss how these individuals embody the message of the quote.

# ACTIVITY

## ARTS AND EMOTIONS

Understanding your responses to art can be confusing. Explore your responses to art on the following chart. In each set of boxes, for each feeling you list, write music you can listen to, books to read, and art to look at to help you connect with these feelings and emotions.

	Feeling

Feeling	

	Feeling

Feeling	

	Feeling

Feeling	

	Feeling

	Feeling

	Feeling

# ACTIVITY

## REFLECTING ON AN INSPIRATIONAL ARTIST

The artists we admire and focus on can have a tremendous effect on our lives. This assignment offers an opportunity for personal introspection and exploration of the profound impact that art and artists can have on our lives. Encourage students to reflect thoughtfully and authentically on their own experiences and connections with the artist they choose to focus on.

**Objective:** To reflect on the influence of an artist on one's life and creative aspirations.

### Instructions:

**Choose an Artist:** Select an artist who has significantly impacted your life. This can be a musician, painter, writer, actor, or any other type of artist whose work has resonated with you.

**Artist Description:** Write a brief paragraph describing the artist and their body of work. Include details about what draws you to their artistry and why you find it inspiring.

**Reflect on Influence:** Consider how this artist has influenced your own creative pursuits or personal development. Reflect on how their work has shaped your perspectives, ignited your passions, or inspired you to explore new ideas and possibilities.

**Share Personal Experience:** Share a specific example or anecdote that illustrates the impact of the artist on your life. Describe a moment when you first discovered their work, a memorable experience related to their art, or a significant realization or insight that their work has sparked in you.

**Express Gratitude:** Conclude your reflection by expressing gratitude to the artist for their contribution to your life and creativity. Reflect on the importance of artists in society and the role they play in shaping culture, inspiring change, and fostering connection and understanding among people.

- **Optional Sharing:** If you feel comfortable, share your reflection with the class or a small group. Discuss similarities and differences in the artists chosen by your peers and explore common themes or insights that emerge from your reflections.

### Accommodations:

### Extended Challenges:

Encourage advanced students to explore the artist's influence on a broader cultural or historical context. They can research the artist's impact on society, art movements, or other artists.

Challenge advanced students to analyze specific aspects of the artist's work in depth, such as themes, techniques, or artistic innovations.

### Additional Support:

Provide simplified biographical information about the artist and their work to help students grasp the key concepts.

Offer guided prompts or questions to help students organize their thoughts and reflections.

Allow extra time or provide additional resources for students who may need more support in completing the assignment.

# ACTIVITY

## RELATING MARIA TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

**Objective:** Students will connect Maria Callas’s quote from *Master Class* to their own lives and personal experiences, reflecting on the value of perseverance and overcoming challenges in achieving greatness.

**Materials Needed:**

- Quotation: “Of course it’s hard. It’s supposed to be hard. If it were easy, everybody would do it. Hard is what makes it great.”
- Writing materials
- Visual aids (optional)

**Introduction (5 minutes):** Introduce the quote by Maria Callas to the students and provide some context from the play *Master Class*. Explain that Maria’s words reflect the idea that challenges and difficulties are an essential part of achieving success and greatness in any endeavor.

**Personal Reflection (15 minutes):** Ask students to reflect individually on times in their own lives when they faced challenges or obstacles in pursuing a goal or passion. Encourage them to think about how they felt during those times and what strategies they used to overcome difficulties.

**Sharing Experiences (20 minutes):** Invite students to share their reflections with a partner or small group. Encourage them to discuss common themes or experiences they identified and how they relate to Maria Callas’s quote. Facilitate a brief class discussion where groups can share their insights and observations.

**Application to Real Life (15 minutes):** Guide students in applying the lessons learned from their personal experiences to broader contexts in their lives. Ask questions such as: How can we apply the idea that “hard is what makes it great” to our academic or extracurricular pursuits? How does perseverance contribute to personal growth and development? Encourage students to brainstorm practical strategies for overcoming challenges and staying motivated.

**Visual Representation (10 minutes):** For visual learners, provide an opportunity for students to create visual representations of Maria Callas’s quote and its relevance to their lives. They can create posters, drawings, or digital graphics that capture the essence

of the quote and its application to their personal experiences.

**Reflection and Discussion (10 minutes):** Conclude the activity with a class discussion where students reflect on what they’ve learned about perseverance and the value of overcoming challenges. Encourage them to share any new insights or perspectives gained from the activity.

**Accommodations:**

**Visual Supports:** Provide visual aids such as posters or diagrams illustrating the steps of the activity and key concepts from the quote. This will assist visual learners in understanding and engaging with the material.

**Peer Collaboration:** Pair students with diverse learning needs together, allowing them to support each other during the reflection and discussion process. Encourage students to share their personal experiences and offer encouragement and empathy to their peers.

**Modified Assignments:** For students who may struggle with written reflection, offer modified assignments such as verbal discussions or artistic expressions of their thoughts and feelings. Allow flexibility in how students demonstrate their understanding of the quote and its application to their lives.

**Extended Time:** Allow students who need more time to process their thoughts and reflect on their experiences to work at their own pace during the activity. This will ensure they have enough time to fully engage with the material and contribute to the group discussion.

**Alternative Presentations:** Offer alternative ways for students to share their reflections, such as recording audio responses or creating multimedia presentations. This accommodates different learning styles and allows students to express themselves in ways that align with their strengths.

Allow extra time or provide additional resources for students who may need more support in completing the assignment.

## RELEVANCE: OPERA IN MODERN SOCIETY

- **Cultural Heritage and Artistic Expression:** Opera serves as a living testament to our cultural heritage and artistic expression. It embodies the creativity, passion, and storytelling prowess of composers, librettists, and performers from diverse backgrounds and eras. Despite its historical roots, opera productions often explore timeless themes and narratives that resonate with modern audiences, offering profound insights into human emotions, relationships, and societal issues.
- **Artistic Innovation and Adaptation:** While opera may be steeped in tradition, it embraces artistic innovation and adaptation to stay relevant in today's fast-paced world. Many opera companies and composers seek to modernize productions by incorporating innovative staging, cutting-edge technology, and a fusion of musical styles. This adaptability ensures that opera remains accessible and engaging to audiences of all ages and cultural backgrounds.
- **Community Engagement and Education:** Opera plays a vital role in community engagement and education, offering opportunities for people to experience and participate in opera-related activities. Through workshops, lectures, and outreach programs, opera houses and educational institutions aim to cultivate a deeper appreciation for opera and foster the next generation of opera enthusiasts and professionals.
- **Global Accessibility and Diversity:** Advancements in technology have made opera more accessible to audiences worldwide. Live broadcasts, digital streaming platforms, and online archives enable people to enjoy opera from anywhere, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. Moreover, opera celebrates cultural diversity by highlighting stories, languages, and traditions from around the globe, enriching the art form and broadening its appeal.
- **Audience Demographics and Trends:** While opera audiences have evolved over time, opera continues to attract a diverse range of patrons and enthusiasts. In the past, opera was often associated with elitism and exclusivity, catering primarily to affluent individuals and cultural elites. However, contemporary opera audiences are more inclusive and diverse, reflecting shifting demographics and societal norms. Today, opera appeals to people of all ages, backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses, with efforts underway to make opera more accessible and relevant to broader audiences.

In conclusion, opera remains a dynamic and vibrant art form that resonates with audiences worldwide. Its enduring relevance, artistic innovation, and global impact ensure that opera will continue to inspire, entertain, and provoke audiences for generations to come.



## ////// **RELEVANCE: OPERA IN MODERN SOCIETY** /////

To enhance learning about opera in modern society, you can ask the following questions:

- What role does opera play in contemporary culture and society?
- How has opera evolved over time to remain relevant to modern audiences?
- What are some common misconceptions about opera, and how can we address them?
- How does opera compare to other forms of entertainment and performing arts in terms of popularity and audience engagement?
- What efforts are being made to make opera more accessible and inclusive to diverse audiences?
- How does technology impact the production, dissemination, and consumption of opera in today's digital age?
- What are some contemporary themes and topics explored in modern opera productions?
- How does opera reflect and respond to current social, political, and cultural issues?
- What role do opera houses, educational institutions, and community organizations play in promoting opera appreciation and engagement?
- How can we encourage younger generations to develop an interest in opera and become future opera enthusiasts or professionals?

These questions can spark discussions, critical thinking, and deeper exploration of opera's relevance and significance in modern society.

## OPERA'S ENDURING INFLUENCE ON MODERN STORYTELLING THROUGH MUSIC

Opera, with its rich tapestry of music and narrative, has long served as a cornerstone of storytelling through music. While often associated with grand theatrics and classical compositions, the influence of opera extends far beyond the confines of the opera house, leaving an indelible mark on a diverse array of musical genres, including hip-hop, rap, pop, and country.

At its core, opera is a form of musical storytelling that combines intricate melodies, expressive vocals, and emotive lyrics to convey powerful narratives and evoke deep emotions. This storytelling tradition has transcended generations and cultural boundaries, influencing composers and musicians across the spectrum of musical genres.

One of the most notable ways in which opera has influenced modern music is through its emphasis on storytelling. Opera composers and librettists meticulously craft narratives that explore themes of love, loss, betrayal, and redemption, weaving together complex characters and dramatic plot twists. These narratives serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary songwriters, who draw upon opera's dramatic storytelling techniques to create compelling lyrics and melodies that resonate with audiences.

In hip-hop and rap, artists often use storytelling to convey personal experiences, social commentary, and cultural narratives. Much like opera, hip-hop and rap employ vivid imagery, dynamic rhythms, and powerful vocal delivery to immerse listeners in the storyteller's world. From Nas's "I Can" to Kendrick Lamar's "Sing About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst," hip-hop artists draw upon opera's tradition of narrative storytelling to craft songs that are as poignant as they are provocative.

Similarly, pop music owes much of its storytelling prowess to the influence of opera. Pop artists like Beyoncé, Adele, and Taylor Swift are known for their ability to weave compelling narratives into their songs, exploring themes of love, heartbreak, and resilience with a level of depth and emotional intensity reminiscent of opera. Whether it's Beyoncé's operatic vocal flourishes in "Halo" or Adele's soul-stirring ballads in "Someone Like You," pop music often draws upon opera's dramatic sensibilities to create chart-topping hits that resonate with audiences worldwide.

Even in genres like country music, opera's influence can be felt in the emotive storytelling and melodic phrasing of songs. Country artists like Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, and Willie Nelson have all incorporated elements of opera into their music, infusing their songs with a sense of theatricality and emotional depth that speaks to the human condition.

In essence, opera's enduring influence on modern music storytelling is a testament to its universal appeal and timeless relevance. Across genres and generations, opera continues to inspire artists to push the boundaries of musical expression, crafting songs that transcend language and culture to touch the hearts and minds of listeners around the world. As we continue to explore the boundless possibilities of musical storytelling, one thing remains clear: opera's legacy will continue to shape the landscape of music for generations to come.

## EXPLORING THEATRE ROLES BEHIND THE SCENES:

Encourage students to explore the various roles involved in putting together a theatre production of *Master Class*. Discuss the different jobs, both professional and volunteer, and ask students which role they would like to have besides being a performer. Have students imagine what the set, lights, and costumes for the show might look like and why.

### Matching Game: Jobs in the Theatre and Opera World

Match the job title with its corresponding job description.

Job Titles:

- a. Director \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Stage Manager \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Costume Designer \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Lighting Designer \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Sound Designer \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Scenic Designer \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Choreographer \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Props Master \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Box Office Manager \_\_\_\_\_

### Job Descriptions:

Responsible for overseeing all aspects of a production, including casting, blocking, and guiding the artistic vision.

Coordinates all backstage activities during rehearsals and performances, ensuring smooth transitions and timing.

1. Creates the mic plot, sound effects and amplification systems for a production, ensuring that actors' voices and music are heard clearly
2. Designs and creates all the clothing the actors wear that reflect the characters' personalities, time periods, and settings of the production.
3. Creates every event with the date, time, tickets, prices and any restrictions. Manages all ticket sales and will-call along with their staff.
4. The boss in charge of each live show, ensuring that all elements of the live production go as planned. Provides cues for stage crew, lighting, sound, fly system and actors for timing and consistency.
5. Creates and designs the lighting for a production, enhancing mood, atmosphere, and visibility on stage. They create a plot and program the instruments used, timing, cross-fades, and cues that orchestrate each scene with light.
6. Designs and constructs the physical scenery and structures that form the backdrop of a production.
7. Designs, sources, constructs, and maintains the various props needed for a production, ensuring they are safe and functional during performances.
8. Creates and teaches dance routines and movement sequences for musical numbers and dramatic scenes.
9. Manages the vision of the entire production, provides guidance and management for all teams involved, provides blocking to actors and helps them in their storytelling.

ANSWERS/KEY:  
1.e 2.c 3.i 4.b 5.d 6.f 7.h 8.g 9.a



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