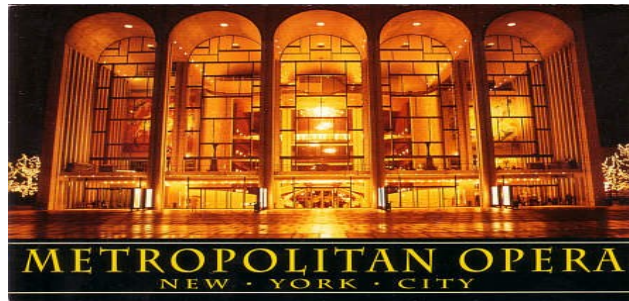


The Metropolitan Opera Talks



Presented by Music Historian Jeffrey Engel

All presentations are on a Thursday, and begin at 1pm, at the Litchfield Community Center
Donations Appreciated

METROPOLITAN OPERA

THURSDAY October 17

November 21 *Akhnaten*

THURSDAY October 3

Turandot

Composer: Giacomo Puccini

Several opera composers saved their best or near best for last. It is certainly true for Mozart *Die Zauberflöte*, Rossini *Guillaume Tell*, Verdi *Falstaff* and Wagner *Parsifal*. The same can be said for Puccini's *Turandot*.

Many critics consider it his greatest work. It is marked by pageantry, adventurous harmonies, rich orchestral sound, one of the most demanding roles for dramatic soprano and a beloved aria that has been sung by every tenor (and at least once by a group of three) from Pavarotti to Bocelli. Set in ancient China, it is a director's dream for an opportunity to run riot in the costume and sets department.

Jeffrey Engel will relate the creative process behind *Turandot* and play excerpts from its score.



Manon

Composer: Jules Massenet

A take on the quintessentially French tale of the beautiful young woman who is incapable of forsaking both love and luxury, Massenet's *Manon* features one of the truly unforgettable, irresistible, and archetypal female characters in opera. While the story is firmly set in class and gender issues of the past, the character of Manon herself is timeless, convincing, and familiar. The opera has been a success ever since its premiere, championed by a diverse roster of singers who have cherished its dramatic opportunities, exalted style, and ravishing music.

THURSDAY October 31

Madama Butterfly

Composer: Giacomo Puccini

A young Japanese geisha who clings to the belief that her arrangement with a visiting American naval officer is a loving and permanent marriage—is one of the defining roles in opera. The story triggers ideas about cultural and sexual imperialism for people far removed from the opera house, and film, Broadway, and popular culture in general have riffed endlessly on it. The lyric beauty of Puccini's score, especially the music for the thoroughly believable lead role, has made *Butterfly* timeless.



Composer: Philip Glass

Director Phelim McDermott tackles another one of Philip Glass's masterpieces, following the now-legendary Met staging of *Satyagraha*. Star countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo is the title pharaoh, the revolutionary ruler who transformed ancient Egypt, with the striking mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges in her Met debut as his wife, Nefertiti. To match the opera's hypnotic, ritualistic music, McDermott has created an arresting vision that includes a virtuosic company of acrobats and jugglers. Karen Kamensek conducts in her Met debut.

This production was originally created by English National Opera and LA Opera.



*Opera Talks at the Litchfield Community Center coincide with the Met Opera's live simulcast of each production.