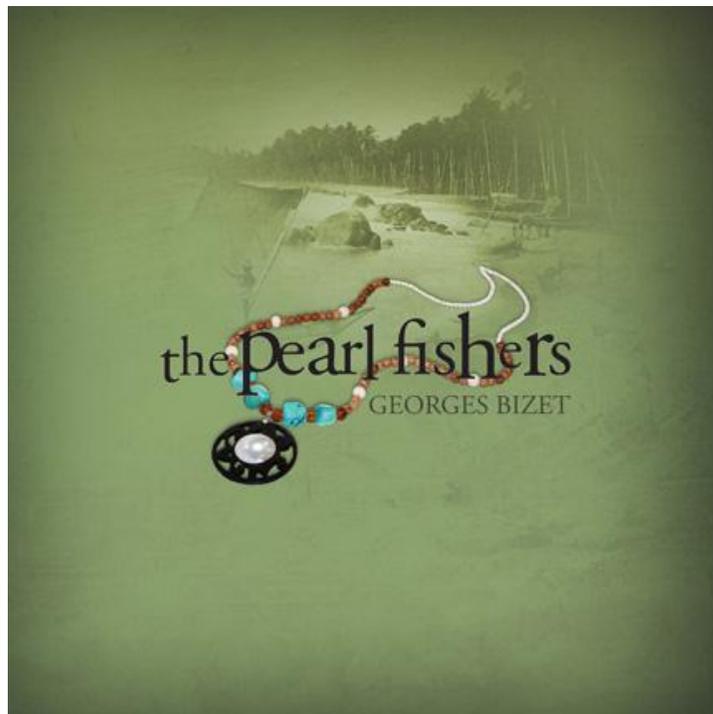


*Virginia  
Opera*



## **STUDY GUIDE**

# **THE PEARL FISHERS**

Music by

**Georges Bizet**

Libretto by

**Eugène Cormon and Michel Carré**

# 2012-2013 SEASON

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## Preface

### Purpose

This study guide is intended to aid you, the teacher, in increasing your students' understanding and appreciation of THE PEARL FISHERS. This will not only add to knowledge about opera, but should develop awareness of other related subjects, making the performance they attend much more enjoyable.

### Most Important

If you only have a limited amount of time, concentrate on the cast of characters, the plot and some of the musical and dramatic highlights of the opera. Recognition produces familiarity which in turn produces a positive experience.

### The Language

The Virginia Opera will perform THE PEARL FISHERS in the original language, French, but an English translation will be projected on a screen above the stage. With these **Supertitles**, audiences can experience the beauty of opera in the original language, yet still understand the meaning of all that is being sung.

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## Cast of Characters

**ZURGA**, the head fisherman .....Baritone

**NADIR**, Zurga's old friend ..... Tenor

**LEILA**, a priestess of Brahma..... Soprano

**NOURABAD**, the high priest of Brahma ..... Bass

**Fishermen, Villagers, Brahmins**..... Chorus

## Brief Summary

Ceylonese fishermen are gathered to prepare for a pearl-fishing expedition. The men choose Zurga as their leader. He is overjoyed when Nadir appears in the village. As the two men talk of the past, Zurga asks Nadir if he has been faithful to their vow of renouncing the love of a beautiful woman they both desired. Nadir says yes, but has secretly kept her memory close to his heart.

A boat arrives carrying a veiled priestess, Leila. She has come to pray for the fishermen as they leave for their annual quest for pearls. When Nadir sees her he cries out, catching her attention. It is clear she remembers him. She continues with the ceremony, reaffirming her vow of chastity and entering the temple with the high priest. Left alone, Nadir confesses that he dreams of Leila and followed her.

Leila prepares for her sacred vigil. To prove she is steadfast and brave she tells Nourabad about a stranger she once saved from capture. In return he gave her a necklace to wear in remembrance. Nourabad departs and Nadir appears in the temple. Leila loves him but fears discovery and urges him to leave. Nadir tries to slip away but is caught. The local people are enraged at this violation of the sacred vigil and want to kill both Leila and Nadir. Zurga calms the crowd but Nourabad steps in and tears away Leila's veil. Zurga recognizes her as the woman he and Nadir both loved but renounced. He is enraged by this betrayal and condemns them to death.

Leila asks Zurga to save Nadir. Resigned by his refusal, Leila gives her necklace to a fisherman asking him to give it to her mother. Zurga sees this and snatches the necklace from the fisherman's hand. At dawn, the lovers prepare for death. Before the execution begins Zurga alerts Nourabad and the villagers that their camp is on fire. As the men rush off to fight the flames, Zurga frees Leila and Nadir. He tells them he set the fire. He shows the necklace to Leila, proving that he was the stranger she saved. They all embrace and Zurga sends the lovers off to freedom.

**Premiere:** September 30, 1863, at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris, France.

## THE PEARL FISHERS

### Full Plot Synopsis and Musical Highlights

#### Act I

A brief, tranquil prelude reveals a seashore scene on the island of Ceylon. The local fishermen are relaxing prior to their annual pearl fishing expedition. They sing the chorus, “*Sur la grève en feu*” (Over the shore on fire), which contains a memorable middle section for men’s voices. Zurga, the head fisherman, reminds the men that they must choose a leader. The men choose Zurga. A new man arrives, one who is known to Zurga. It is Nadir, a former friend whom Zurga has not seen for a while. Nadir has been wandering in the forest for the past year and is welcomed warmly by Zurga as the festive scene of dancing and drinking concludes the scene.

Zurga and Nadir have been left alone and they reminisce about the past. Zurga asks if Nadir has kept his vow. In a stirring duet, “*Au fond du temple saint*” (At the back of the holy temple), the two men recall the beautiful girl they both were bedazzled by and how they vowed to place their friendship above their yearnings and renounce her and the desire they felt. The musical accompaniment features the flute and the harp, an instrumental combination that was used to symbolize sanctity in French opera during this period. The duet also introduces an important musical theme as the men relive the moment they first saw the entrancing woman. They sing the words, “*Oui, c’est elle,*” (Yes, it is she), “*C’est déesse!*” (It is the goddess) accompanied by the flute. The theme represents Leila.

A boat arrives bringing a veiled woman and the high priest Nourabad to the village to pray for the success of the upcoming expedition and the safety of the fishermen. The woman is Leila. Music from the Prelude accompanies her arrival followed by Leila’s theme in the orchestra. The chorus welcomes her but neither Zurga nor Nadir is aware of her identity. Zurga asks her three questions, each one intoned higher by the interval of a minor third. Leila reaffirms her vow of chastity, responding to his questions by saying, “*Je le jure*” (I promise). Nadir and Leila have recognized each other, but the ceremony continues. As Leila is led into the temple the chorus sings a hymn to Brahma.

Nadir is left alone and sings an aria called a *romance*, “*Je crois entendre encore*” (I think I hear her still) where he reveals that he dreams of Leila and has followed her to the village. The solo oboe is featured and the range of the *romance* is very high. Nadir’s distress is demonstrated musically by his completion of the piece on an unresolved note. He goes to sleep leaving the English horn to resolve the harmony and conclude the aria. This is an example of the young Bizet’s innovative approach.

Leila begins her prayers to Siva. Her voice is heard above the chanting of the chorus as her invocation becomes increasingly florid and ornamented. Nadir is awakened by Leila’s voice. When she hears Nadir’s voice from outside the temple, she pulls aside

her veil. Their words mingle and become a declaration of love. Musically, Leila and Nadir are supported by the chorus of villagers and fishermen, who continue their invocation to Brahma. The resulting ensemble provides a passionate conclusion to Act I.

## Act II

An off-stage choral chant begins Act II. Nourabad tells Leila she can stop praying and rest. He reminds her of her vows and asks if she feels any fear. In a dramatic recitative Leila relates a story from years earlier when she placed her own life at risk to protect a man who was fleeing for his life. In return the man gave her a necklace and told her to wear it in remembrance. She tells Nourabad that she will be no less brave at this time than she was when she saved the man's life. Reassured, Nourabad leaves, and the off-stage choral concludes the scene.

Left alone, Leila reassures herself that Nadir is nearby in a recitative and short aria (*cavatina*), "*Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre*" (In the dark night, as in days gone by). A solo oboe is heard, a musical reminder of Nadir's earlier *romance*. Nadir's voice is heard as he approaches the temple and then he appears. The pair excitedly greets one another and sings a duet, "*Ton coeur n'a pas compris le mien*" (Your heart hasn't understood my own). Leila is very fearful that Nadir might be seen with her and she implores him to leave. He agrees to leave and return the next night. Just after he departs a shot is heard. Nourabad summons the guards and they pursue the intruder.

The villagers and fishermen are aroused and fearful. The sound of an approaching storm adds to their frightened reaction. They sing a brief but imposing chorus reflecting great distress. Nadir is brought before them by Nourabad. He tells them of the violation of the sacred vigil and accuses both Nadir and Leila of betrayal. The crowd reacts with fury and is ready to kill them both on the spot. Leila cries out in fear, but Nadir steps in front of her, ready to defend her life with his own. At the critical moment Zurga steps in and stops the crowd. He forces them to obey him. He is about to let the pair leave when Nourabad insists that Leila reveal herself to all. When Zurga sees her face he is thunderstruck and then enraged. He curses the pair and asks the crowd to avenge him. As Leila and Nadir are led away, everyone falls on their knees fearful of the consequences of this sacrilege. As the act ends, all pray to Brahma for protection, terrified that his wrath will fall on their heads.

## Act III

Zurga sits alone in his tent filled with desolation and thinking of Nadir in the aria, "*O Nadir, tender ami de mon jeune âge*" (Oh! Nadir, tender friend of my youth). He struggles with his decision to condemn Nadir to death, and allowing his jealousy and rage to rule him. Leila is escorted into his tent. The flute plays her theme and carries the melodic line while Leila sings "above" the melody joining it only on some of the notes, another example of composer Bizet's early innovations. Zurga and Leila sing a duet as she explains why Nadir's life should be saved and Zurga responds, positively at first, but increasingly hostile. Leila meets with failure when Zurga's anger and jealousy are aroused upon her declaration of love for Nadir. He refuses to stop the execution and tells

her that she and Nadir can be united in death. Nourabad leads Leila away as her theme is heard from the orchestra at a very slow tempo. She removes her necklace and hands it to one of the fishermen, asking him to give it to her mother. Zurga observes her actions and, with a startled cry, takes the necklace from the young fisherman as the scene ends.

The final scene opens with the chorus of villagers and fishermen eagerly anticipating the coming execution. They are dancing around the pyre that has been erected and sing of their desire to strike with their daggers. Nadir is tied near the pyre awaiting the arrival of Leila. When Leila is brought in the tone becomes more somber. Nadir and Leila sing a hymn-like duet, "*O lumière sainte, ô divine étreinte*" (Oh sacred light, oh divine embrace), as they accept their coming death with grace and dignity.

A red glow appears and Nourabad and the men believe it is dawn. As they raise their daggers Zurga appears and stops them. He tells them it is not dawn but a fire that is consuming their camp! He urges them to run and save their children. The crowd rushes out leaving Zurga, Nadir and Leila alone. Zurga releases their bonds and tells them he set the fire. He shows the necklace to Leila and reveals that he was the fugitive she saved so many years before. Now he wishes to save them both in return.

Nadir and Leila cry out and rush to embrace him. Zurga urges them to go quickly while there is time. Nadir asks, "*Et toi, Zurga?*" (And you, Zurga?). Zurga replies, "*Dieu seul sait l'avenir*" (God alone knows the future). He watches calmly as the overjoyed couple leave together. Zurga remains there, standing alone, awaiting his fate.

# THE PEARL FISHERS

## Historical Background

France was the operatic capital of Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century. In general French operas fell into two categories, one with serious and heroic subject matter called grand opera and a second, less serious and more melodramatic, called opera comique. Grand opera had sung dialogue called recitative, and a grandiose treatment of its subject with regard to singing, instrumental music and staging. Opera comique had spoken dialogue in between the musical numbers and included operettas, romantic comedies, and “rescue” and “horror” operas. A third form of French opera evolved out of the opera comique genre to fill in the “middle ground” between these two categories. It became known as French “lyric” opera. The French composers most associated with Lyric opera before 1870 were Charles Gounod and Ambroise Thomas. Lyric opera reflected the desire of composers to express more serious, introspective themes within the less serious format of opera comique. In all forms of French opera the French language and fidelity to the text played a key role. The libretto, faithfully and economically expressed through music, was of paramount importance.

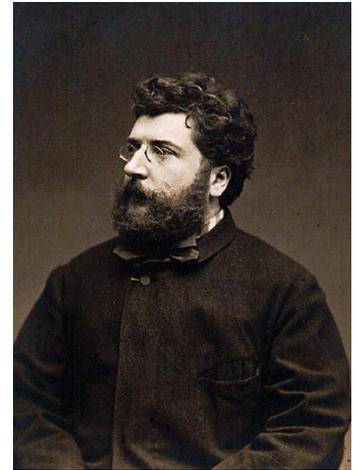
Georges Bizet was a student of Charles Gounod and had written several operas by the time he was twenty-four. THE PEARL FISHERS was the second one to be staged and is very reminiscent of Gounod’s lyric opera style. Bizet originally wrote THE PEARL FISHERS with spoken dialogue but added sung recitatives before the opera opened. The subject matter reflected the contemporary French public’s fascination with the East and exoticism. Composers used the elements of rhythm, harmony, melody and instrumentation to evoke distant lands and cultures. Exotic-sounding music or the musical treatment of an Eastern theme or locale was very popular with opera audiences. The setting for Bizet’s opera was the island of Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka). The original setting of the opera had been Mexico. Eastern or Asian cultures collectively were known as the Orient. The depiction of Eastern cultures in art, literature and music came to be known as “Orientalism.”

THE PEARL FISHERS was well received by the public who recognized Bizet’s gifts and his lyrical, harmonic and orchestral abilities. The critics were dismissive of his talent and seemed particularly incensed that Bizet took a curtain call on opening night. The one critic who treated Bizet’s work with high regard was the composer Hector Berlioz. The opera enjoyed eighteen performances in 1863 but then was not performed again until long after Bizet’s death. It was the success of Bizet’s most famous opera, *Carmen*, that renewed interest in THE PEARL FISHERS. A revival of the opera took place in 1893 at the Opera Comique theater, some thirty years after its original premiere. In performances over a period of years, dissatisfaction with the conclusion of the opera resulted in productions with a variety of endings. Additional alterations were made to various parts of the musical score.

However, in 1975 an original vocal score of the opera was uncovered. This discovery provided clarity on Bizet’s original intent and generated a desire to stage the opera as Bizet wrote it. Since that time the strength of Bizet’s composition and its strong roles for soprano, tenor and baritone has delighted audiences worldwide and propelled THE PEARL FISHERS into a standard part of the operatic repertory.

## ABOUT THE COMPOSER: GEORGES BIZET

Georges Bizet, born October 25, 1838, was named Alexandre César Léopold Bizet. However, he was christened “Georges” and that became the name he used. He was born into a musical family. His father, Adolphe Bizet, was a voice teacher. His mother came from a famous musical family and was an excellent pianist. It was unsurprising when Georges was admitted to the Paris Conservatory at the age of nine. He quickly rose to prominence in the school. His most important teacher was Jacques Halévy, who taught Charles Gounod, and was a distinguished opera composer. Bizet was also mentored by Gounod. In 1857 Bizet won the coveted Prix de Rome, a competition founded in 1666 by Louis XIV. Other famous Prix winners were Berlioz, Massenet, Gounod and Debussy.



Bizet departed for Rome and spent three years studying the musical scores of the great masters, and Italian literature, art and culture. At the end of the first year he was asked to submit a religious work as a progress report. As a self-described atheist, Bizet felt uneasy and hypocritical writing a religious piece. Instead, he submitted a comic opera. Publicly, the committee accepted, and acknowledged his musical talent. Privately, the committee conveyed their displeasure. By his action Bizet revealed an independence that would be symbolized later on by innovative ideas in his operas.

When Bizet returned to Paris and became self-supporting, he composed, gave piano lessons, produced orchestrations and piano transcriptions and wrote operas. Financially, he found his chosen profession "a splendid art, but a sad trade." His operas met with limited financial success but gained him stature as a talented composer with great promise. Among these early operas was *THE PEARL FISHERS*. In 1867 he became engaged to G enevi ve Hal evy, the daughter of his former teacher at the Paris Conservatory and the noted composer of *La Juive*. The family of Bizet’s mother objected to the marriage because the family was Jewish and the Hal evy family objected because of Bizet’s atheism, bohemian lifestyle and financial irresponsibility. The marriage took place in 1869 but it was not destined to be a happy one. A son was born in 1872.

During this time Bizet was commissioned to write a three-act opera by the Opera-Comique. He chose the novel *Carmen* by Prosper M erim e as the source for the opera. The management of the Comique was very unhappy with the subject matter. Unfazed by their concerns, Bizet wrote an opera that captured the exoticism and flair of Spain while remaining true to his lyrical French roots. His brilliant orchestration and originality brought a new dimension to the operatic stage. But Bizet was a man ahead of his time. The subject matter was more realistic and shocking than many opera audiences could accept.

On March 3, 1875, the opera had its premiere but was deemed a colossal failure. Bizet retired to his country estate where his health failed. He died at the age of thirty-six on June 3, 1875, three months to the day of the opera’s premiere. Coincidentally, it was also his sixth wedding anniversary. Four thousand people attended his funeral, and Charles Gounod served as one of the pallbearers. Today the opera *Carmen* is considered a masterpiece and has become one of the most popular and successful operas in history.



With the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, composers in America diverged from European traditions in order to focus on their own roots while exploring and developing the vast body of the country's folk music and legends. Composers such as Aaron Copland, Douglas Moore, Carlisle Floyd, Howard Hanson, and Robert Ward have all crafted operas that have been presented throughout the world to great success. Today, composers John Adams, Philip Glass, and John Corigliano enjoy success both at home and abroad and are credited with the infusion of new life into an art form which continues to evolve even as it approaches its fifth century.



# The Operatic Voice

A true (and brief) definition of the “operatic” voice is a difficult proposition. Many believe the voice is “born,” while just as many hold to the belief that the voice is “trained.” The truth lies somewhere between the two. Voices that can sustain the demands required by the operatic repertoire do have many things in common. First and foremost is a strong physical technique that allows the singer to sustain long phrases through the control of both the inhalation and exhalation of breath. Secondly, the voice (regardless of its size) must maintain a resonance in both the head (mouth, sinuses) and chest cavities. The Italian word “*squillo*” (squeal) is used to describe the brilliant tone required to penetrate the full symphony orchestra that accompanies the singers. Finally, all voices are defined by both the actual voice “type” and the selection of repertoire for which the voice is ideally suited.

Within the five major voice types (*Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass*) there is a further delineation into categories (*Coloratura, Lyric, Spinto, Dramatic*) which help to define each particular instrument. The *Coloratura* is the highest within each voice type whose extended upper range is complimented by extreme flexibility. The *Lyric* is the most common of the “types.” This instrument is recognized more for the exceptional beauty of its tone rather than its power or range. The *Spinto* is a voice which combines the beauty of a lyric with the weight and power of a *Dramatic*, which is the most “powerful” of the voices. The *Dramatic* instrument is characterized by the combination of both incredible volume and “steely” intensity.

While the definition presented in the preceding paragraph may seem clearly outlined, many voices combine qualities from each category, thus carving an unique niche in operatic history. Just as each person is different from the next, so is each voice. Throughout her career Maria Callas defied categorization as she performed and recorded roles associated with each category in the soprano voice type. Joan Sutherland as well can be heard in recordings of soprano roles as diverse as the coloratura Gilda in *Rigoletto* to the dramatic Turandot in *Turandot*. Below is a very brief outline of voice types and categories with roles usually associated with the individual voice type.

	<i>Coloratura</i>	<i>Lyric</i>	<i>Spinto</i>	<i>Dramatic</i>
<b><i>Soprano</i></b>	Norina (Don Pasquale) Gilda (Rigoletto) Lucia (Lucia di Lammermoor)	Liu (Turandot) Mimi (La Bohème) Pamina (Magic Flute)	Tosca (Tosca) Amelia (A Masked Ball) Leonora (Il Trovatore)	Turandot (Turandot) Norma (Norma) Elektra (Elektra)
<b><i>Mezzo-Soprano</i></b>	Rosina (Barber of Seville) Angelina (La Cenerentola) Dorabella (Così fan tutte)	Carmen (Carmen) Charlotte (Werther) Giulietta (Hoffmann)	Santuzza (Cavalleria) Adalgisa (Norma) The Composer (Ariadne auf Naxos)	Azucena (Il Trovatore) Ulrica (A Masked Ball) Herodias (Salome)
<b><i>Tenor</i></b>	Count Almaviva (Barber of Seville) Don Ottavio (Don Giovanni) Ferrando (Così fan tutte)	Alfredo (La Traviata) Rodolfo (La Bohème) Tamino (Magic Flute)	Calaf (Turandot) Pollione (Norma) Cavaradossi (Tosca)	Dick Johnson (Fanciulla) Don Jose (Carmen) Otello (Otello)
<b><i>Baritone</i></b>	Figaro (Barber of Seville) Count Almavira (Le nozze di Figaro) Dr. Malatesta (Don Pasquale)	Marcello (La Bohème) Don Giovanni (Don Giovanni) Sharpless (Madama Butterfly)	<b>Verdi Baritone</b> Germont (La Traviata) Di Luna (Il Trovatore) Rigoletto (Rigoletto)	Scarpia (Tosca) Jochanaan (Salome) Jack Rance (Fanciulla)
<b><i>Bass</i></b>	Bartolo (Barber of Seville) Don Magnifico (Cenerentola) Dr. Dulcamara (Elixir of Love)	Leporello (Don Giovanni) Colline (La Bohème) Figaro (Marriage of Figaro)	<b>Buffo Bass</b> Don Pasquale (Don Pasquale) Don Alfonso (Così fan tutte)	<b>Basso Cantate</b> Oroveso (Norma) Timur (Turandot) Sarastro (Magic Flute)

# Opera Production

Opera is created by the combination of myriad art forms. First and foremost are the actors who portray characters by revealing their thoughts and emotions through the singing voice. The next very important component is a full symphony orchestra that accompanies the singing actors and actresses, helping them to portray the full range of emotions possible in the operatic format. The orchestra performs in an area in front of the singers called the orchestra pit while the singers perform on the open area called the stage. Wigs, costumes, sets and specialized lighting further enhance these performances, all of which are designed, created, and executed by a team of highly trained artisans.

The creation of an opera begins with a dramatic scenario crafted by a playwright or dramaturg who alone or with a librettist fashions the script or libretto that contains the words the artists will sing. Working in tandem, the composer and librettist team up to create a cohesive musical drama in which the music and words work together to express the emotions revealed in the story. Following the completion of their work, the composer and librettist entrust their new work to a conductor who with a team of assistants (repetiteurs) assumes responsibility for the musical preparation of the work. The conductor collaborates with a stage director (responsible for the visual component) in order to bring a performance of the new piece to life on the stage. The stage director and conductor form the creative spearhead for the new composition while assembling a design team which will take charge of the actual physical production.



Set designers, lighting designers, costume designers, wig and makeup designers and even choreographers must all be brought “on board” to participate in the creation of the new production. The set designer combines the skills of both an artist and an architect using “blueprint” plans to design the actual physical set which will reside on the stage, recreating the physical setting required by the storyline. These blueprints are turned over to a team of carpenters who are specially trained in the art of stage carpentry. Following the actual building of the set, painters following instructions from the set designers’ original plans paint the set. As the set is assembled on the stage, the lighting designer works with a team of electricians to throw light onto both the stage and the set in an atmospheric as well as practical way. Using specialized lighting instruments, colored gels and a state of the art computer, the designer along with the stage director create a “lighting plot” by writing “lighting cues” which are stored in the computer and used during the actual performance of the opera.

During this production period, the costume designer in consultation with the stage director has designed appropriate clothing for the singing actors and actresses to wear. These designs are fashioned into patterns and crafted by a team of highly skilled artisans called cutters, stitchers, and sewers. Each costume is specially made for each singer using his/her individual measurements. The wig and makeup designer, working with the costume

designer, designs and creates wigs which will complement both the costume and the singer as well as represent historically accurate “period” fashions.

As the actual performance date approaches, rehearsals are held on the newly crafted set, combined with costumes, lights, and orchestra in order to ensure a cohesive performance that will be both dramatically and musically satisfying to the assembled audience.

## Discussion Questions

1. How does one “fish” for pearls? Is this a dangerous job?
2. What is the importance of the sacred prayer vigil to the fishermen?
3. Would a disruption of the prayer vigil make the fishermen fearful? Would they feel they might be in danger during their expedition?
4. Discuss the importance of the relationship between Zurga and Nadir.
5. What is the bond between the two friends?
6. How does the composer Bizet express this relationship musically?
7. How does this story reflect the traditional love triangle?
8. Is there more than one rivalry in this triangle?
9. Between which characters does a rivalry exist?
10. What is the dilemma that Leila faces in Act II?
11. Which relationship proves to be the stronger – the one between Leila and Nadir, the one between Nadir and Zurga, or the one between Leila and Zurga?
12. What instrument do we associate with Leila’s theme?
13. How do you think Zurga feels after he frees Leila and Nadir and they depart, leaving him alone?
14. How might the fishermen treat Zurga when they returned from putting out the fire in their camp and realized Nadir and Leila had been set free?
15. Which character do you most respect?
16. The composer, Bizet, was trying to achieve an “exotic” sound with his music. Was he successful? How did he achieve his goal?

# Opera Etiquette at an opera performance

**Before bringing a group to the Opera, please go over etiquette with your students to ensure an enjoyable experience for all audience members.**

## **What to Wear**

Most people like to dress up when they go to the opera because it's part of the fun! Nowadays you can pretty much wear whatever you want. However, an evening at the opera is usually considered to be a special occasion. We encourage dressing in layers so bring a sweater, wrap or jacket just in case.

## **Arrive On Time**

You should always make sure you get to the opera house in plenty of time to find parking, get your tickets and be seated before the performance starts. Thirty minutes before start time (curtain) is usually sufficient. If you are late, the ushers may let you in after the overture, but, if there is not an overture, you may have to wait until intermission and miss the entire first act!

## **Remain Quiet during the Performance**

There is nothing worse than sitting near a chatterbox, someone text messaging or a ringing cell phone during a performance. Please turn off anything that can make noise or light. Save your comments for intermission and, by all means, do not sing along! Remember recording devices, video and photography is not permitted of any Virginia Opera performance.

## **Applaud When Appropriate**

The correct times to applaud are when the conductor takes the podium at the very beginning of the performance, after the overture, after a big aria, at the end of each act, and when the singers come out to take a bow. If you are unsure when those times are, it is best to wait and follow the lead of other audience members.

## **Applaud Appropriately**

Clapping while sitting or standing is always acceptable, and you can yell "*Bravo!*" to show appreciation for a male singer, "*Brava!*" to show appreciation for a female singer, and "*Bravi!*" to show appreciation for a group of singers. Yelling out anything other than those three words, as well as screaming or whistling, is inappropriate.

## ***Why we follow these etiquette rules:***

- Because it is respectful to the performers and the theater to dress nicely.
- Because it's dangerous to try to step over people in the dark, and because it's disrespectful to the performers and the other audience members.
- Because the performers really can hear the whispers from on stage, and other people are trying to watch.
- Gum, candy, and drinks make noise that will distract the performers, and are not permitted in the theatre.