

A woman with dark, wavy hair and red lipstick is reclining on an ornate, dark wood chair with a light-colored, floral-patterned upholstery. She is wearing a dark blue, off-the-shoulder gown with intricate lace detailing. Her right arm is raised behind her head, and her left hand rests on her lap. The background is dark with some green foliage visible on the left.

**SEATTLE
OPERA.**

**LA
TRAVIATA**

MAY 6-21

SENSORY GUIDE

SEATTLE OPERA.

LA TRAVIATA SENSORY GUIDE

Environmental Considerations for *La traviata*

1. McCaw Hall is an expansive, 2,900 seat auditorium. The sensory experience is very much affected by the seat chosen in the performance space. There are three main seating areas: Orchestra, First Tier, and Second Tier. Generally, the Orchestra section is closer to the stage and feels more open with the ceiling rising over 100 feet above the seats. The First Tier starts approximately 85 feet from the stage. All seats in this section look down on the stage. The Second Tier starts approximately 120 feet from the stage. This section feels more sheltered as it is closest to the ceiling and farthest from the stage. Please see the sensory seating guide for more specific information.
2. There is a 55-piece orchestra with 35 stringed instruments (violin, viola, cello, bass and harp), 10 brass (trumpet, trombone, horn and tuba), 9 woodwinds (flute, piccolo, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon), and 1 percussion (timpani).
3. *La traviata* takes place in three acts with an intermission in the middle of Act II. Act I and the first part of Act II are approximately 66 minutes. Intermission is 25 minutes in duration. The second half of Act II and Act III are approximately 50 minutes.

Performance Content Considerations for *La traviata*

1. Each of the main characters in *La traviata* has a distinct vocal type. This impacts the type of sound you will hear from the performer.
 - a. **Violetta**, dramatic coloratura soprano. High in pitch with dark tones and flexible in skill. Highest range for women.
 - b. **Alfredo**, lyric tenor. Warm and flexible, in the highest range for men. A bright, full timbre.
 - c. **Germont**, lyric baritone. Smooth, flexible in skill, sweet in tone. Middle range for men.
 - d. **Annina**, lyric mezzo-soprano. Strong, smooth and sensitive. Still in the high range for women, but not as high as a soprano.
 - e. **Flora**, lyric mezzo-soprano. See above.
 - f. **Baron Douphol**, baritone. Agile and warm in tone. A mid-range male voice.
 - g. **Doctor Grenvil**, bass. The deepest voice type for males.
2. Volume ranges as heard from the front row of the orchestra level average around 74 dB and reach 94 dB briefly during moments with the full ensemble and orchestra at fortissimo. 70 dB is about the volume of a noisy restaurant. 80 dB is about the volume of a vacuum cleaner. 90 dB is about the volume of a lawn mower. The dB scale does not take into account the timbre and resonance of a sound and sounds that are often interpreted as being unpleasant at 80-100 dB may be enjoyable. Those who are sensitive to loud, full sound may wish to wear noise dampening headphones.
3. During the opera Violetta is dying of consumption (tuberculosis). There are several scenes with her in a hospital bed.

Key to Symbols








Visual Intensity










Auditory Intensity









Emotional Intensity

Scene Number	Sensory Category	Description
ACT I		
1. Introduction, Chorus and Scenes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The scene is brightly lit, with many performers and lots of movement. - The volume increases greatly when the full ensemble sings.
2. Drinking song		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This scene is louder than the average volume of the opera.
3. Valse and Duet <i>Violetta and Alfredo</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violetta collapses from weakness caused by consumption. - Violetta and Alfredo passionately say goodbye to each other.
4. Stretta of Introduction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This scene begins with lots of brass and timpani. It crescendos vocally and instrumentally, finishing with Violetta collapsing on her bed.
5. Recitative and Aria <i>Violetta</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violetta becomes distraught during her aria, singing, "Madness! A vain dream!"

ACT II		
<p>6. Recitative and Aria <i>Alfredo</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When Alfredo realizes Violetta has been selling everything she owns to fund their lifestyle, he becomes upset and impassioned. -The music crescendos with full brass adding depth and volume.
<p>7. Recitative and Scena <i>Violetta and Germont</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When Germont asks Violetta to make a sacrifice, she recoils, becoming agitated and melancholic. - Upon realizing that Germont wishes her to leave Alfredo permanently, she becomes distraught. The music reaches fortissimo at the same time. - As Germont convinces her to leave Alfredo, she begins to weep. - Violetta becomes insistent, beseeching Germont with, “When I am dead...tell him why I did this.”
<p>8. Recitative <i>Violetta and Alfredo</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violetta continues to cry as she writes her letter to Alfredo. She is startled by Alfredo’s entrance. - Violetta becomes frantic and seeks assurance when Alfredo says that his father will love Violetta when he meets her. - The orchestra swells to a robust sound as Violetta exits. - Alfredo is heartbroken when he opens Violetta letter.

<p>10. Recitative and Aria <i>Germont</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Germont and Alfredo are very angry and fight with each other as Alfredo comes to terms with Violetta leaving him. - The orchestra crescendos when Alfredo and Germont exit.
<p>11. Scena <i>Flora, Marquis, Doctor</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The scene opens on a lavish set of deep red and purple hues and many performers onstage.
<p>12. Chorus of Gypsies</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The gypsies fill the stage and dance. Their dance is accompanied by percussive hitting on their tambourines. - Flora becomes highly agitated at the Marquis' possible infidelity. - The music loudly crests as the chorus joins in.
<p>13. Chorus of Matadors</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dance sequence tells the story of a matador and five bulls. - The song reaches fortissimo as the chorus joins in.

14. Gaming Scene		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Alfredo enters angrily and verbally spars with Violetta as she states she is afraid of the Baron.- Alfredo attacks Violetta and pulls her hair. Violetta weeps.- Alfredo publicly humiliates Violetta and makes a spectacle of himself. The crowd turns on Alfredo. Germont chastises Alfredo as the music becomes intense.- Alfredo is filled with regret and self-flagellation.
15. Octet and Chorus	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Germont chastises Alfredo as the music becomes intense.- Alfredo is filled with regret and self-flagellation.- The music becomes increasingly complex with voices layering on top of each other.

ACT III		
16. Recitative and Aria <i>Violetta,</i> <i>Annina,</i> <i>Doctor</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violetta lies dying from consumption in hospital. - Violetta becomes despondent at her decline, thinking she will never see Alfredo again. “How I’ve changed...I know there’s no hope!”
17. Bacchanal Chorus		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As the revelers dance by, they wave capes. The light changes and casts ornate shadows.
18. Recitative and Duet <i>Violetta and</i> <i>Alfredo</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violetta gets out of bed, trying to go to church with Alfredo. She collapses from the effort. - Violetta has been rising in demeanor, believing that she may be able to recover. Finally, she realizes that she is, in fact, dying and is despondent. - Alfredo sings robustly to her as the full orchestra swells in a rich crescendo. - Germont enters, filled with regret and guilt. - The music becomes very complex with multiple overlapping voices. - Violetta rises in joy and collapses in death.
19. Finale		