

# SEATTLE OPERA.



# TOSCA

# SENSORY GUIDE

## **Runtime**

*Tosca* takes place in three acts with an intermission after each act. Act I is approximately 48 minutes long, followed by a 25 minute intermission. Act II is approximately 42 minutes long, followed by a 23 minute intermission. Act III is approximately 28 minutes long.

## **Environmental Considerations for *Tosca***

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' 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. The lyrics are projected in English above the proscenium.

## **Performance Content Considerations for *Tosca***

1. Each of the main characters in *Tosca* has a distinct vocal type. This impacts the type of sound you will hear from the performer.
  - Cesare Angelotti, bass, the lowest male voice
  - Floria Tosca, soprano, the highest female voice
  - Mario Cavaradossi, tenor, the highest naturally occurring male voice type
  - Baron Scarpia, baritone, the male voice between tenor and bass
  - Spoletta, tenor, the highest naturally occurring male voice type
  - Sciarrone, bass, the lowest male voice
  - Sacristan, bass, the lowest male voice
2. *Tosca* features a 75-piece orchestra with 44 stringed instruments (violin, viola, cello, and bass), 13 woodwinds (piccolo, flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon and contra bassoon), 11 brass (horn, English horn, trombone and trumpet), 4 percussionists, a harp, an organ and keyboard bells.
3. Volume ranges as heard from the front row of the orchestra level average around 75 dB and reach up to 95 dB briefly during some songs.
  - The dB scale does not take into account the timbre and resonance of a sound and is only one component of how pleasant or unpleasant one might experience a sound. Moments of music with outstanding timbre or resonance are noted below. Those who are sensitive to loud sustained notes from singers and orchestra may wish to wear noise dampening headphones. 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.

- Musically the orchestra of Tosca frequently swells, as the singers quickly increase their volume

4. **Tosca contains gunshots, an execution by firing squad, a stabbing, attempted rape, torture and a suicide.** These are noted in the sensory audience guide

In the following guide, the performance is divided by characters' scenes. Moments of heightened sensory intensity are noted in each scene.

#### Key to Symbols



Visual intensity








Auditory Intensity




















Emotional Intensity



Surprise

Scene	Sensory Category	Heightened Sensory Moments
<b>ACT I</b>		
1. Angelotti alone		- Angelotti appears in pain and starving
2. Sacristan alone		
3. Cavaradossi & Sacristan		
4. Cavaradossi & Angelotti		
5. Cavaradossi & Tosca		- Tosca is enraged at Cavaradossi - Tosca's voice soars
6. Cavaradossi & Angelotti	  	- Angelotti is weak and stumbling - The brass instruments soar - A cannon blasts

7. Sacristan & Church Choir	  	
8. Scarpia, henchmen, & Sacristan		- Music crescendos
9. Scarpia & Tosca	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scarpia pretends to be outraged</li> <li>- Tosca is livid</li> <li>- Tosca exits, enraged</li> <li>- The timpani thunders</li> </ul>
10. Scarpia & Rome		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scarpia plots to kill Cavaradossi and make Tosca his own</li> <li>- The chorus builds to a thrilling climax</li> </ul>
<b>ACT II</b>		
11. Scarpia alone		
12. Scarpia & Spoletta		
13. Scarpia & Cavaradossi		- Scarpia interrogates Cavaradossi
14. Scarpia, Tosca & Cavaradossi	 	- The brass enhances the emotions
15. Torture Scene		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cavaradossi is tortured</li> <li>- Tosca is enraged that Cavaradossi is being tortured at Scarpia's behest</li> </ul>
16. Aftermath of Torture		- Weak from torture, a bloodied Cavaradossi appears onstage

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cavaradossi is angry at Tosca revealing Angelotti's location</li> </ul>
17. Scarpia & Tosca		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tosca cries out in pain as Cavaradossi is taken to be put before the firing squad</li> <li>- Scarpia offers to spare Cavaradossi if Tosca gives herself to him</li> <li>- Scarpia attempt to rape Tosca</li> <li>- Tosca is in anguish</li> <li>- Angelotti's suicide is revealed</li> <li>- Tosca grabs knife from table and stabs Scarpia in the neck. Scarpia bleeds to death.</li> </ul>
18. Tosca, Scarpia corpse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tosca panics over having killed Scarpia</li> </ul>
<b>ACT III</b>		
19. Shepherd		
20. Jailor & Cavaradossi		
21. Tosca & Cavaradossi	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tosca tells Cavaradossi she stabbed Scarpia to death, shaking from the memory</li> </ul>
22. Discovery & Denouement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Soldiers raise muskets at Cavaradossi to execute him. <b>There are very loud gunshots.</b></li> <li>- Cavaradossi bleeds to death</li> <li>- Tosca discovers that Cavaradossi has been executed. Distraught, she commits suicide</li> </ul>