

# Cinematic realism, reflexivity and the American ‘Madame Butterfly’ narratives

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**Abstract:** This article focuses on two cinematic versions of the ‘Madame Butterfly’ tale. Produced near the beginning of the sound era, the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* struggles to co-opt Puccini’s opera and thereby create a fully cinematic Butterfly. *My Geisha*, created three decades later, aspires to subvert Orientalist representation by reflecting back upon Puccini’s and Hollywood’s Butterflies with hip sophistication. Both films work simultaneously with and against the Butterfly canon in intriguing ways and both are shaped by prevailing American perceptions of race and gender. In investigating the relationship between these films and Puccini’s opera, I raise broader issues of comparative genre analysis, focusing particularly on exotic representation on stage and screen. Does film, in its bid to project exotic realism in both sound and image, succeed in surpassing the experience of staged Orientalist opera?

This is a tale that has no beginning. In the opening of John Luther Long’s 1898 *Madame Butterfly*, an American naval officer starts to tell the tale of ‘the Pink Geisha’. Pinkerton cuts him short, complaining that he has heard this story of an American sailor’s romance with a Japanese woman a thousand times before.<sup>1</sup> ‘Madame Butterfly’ narratives have been retold in multiple genres at least since Pierre Loti’s 1887 *Madame Chrysanthème* and Long’s 1898 short story. The tale has appeared in the form of the fictionalised memoir, short story, staged melodrama, popular song, opera, musical, silent film, sound film, opera telecast, film-opera, pornographic novel and concept album (see Table 1). Just as Long’s Pinkerton alludes derisively to previous tellings, each successive rendition of the narrative either covertly or overtly reflects back upon earlier versions. Inescapably, versions of the tale following Puccini’s 1904 opera have taken into account not only its plot, but its sonic representations of Japan as well. Butterfly’s lament continues to reverberate across genres, propagating multiple intertextual echoes.

Why have ‘Madame Butterfly’ narratives proven so compelling for so long, particularly in the United States? Is Long’s damning story a persistent irritant that white American males have sought to assuage? Or does the Orientalist fantasy of following Pinkerton’s example continue to inspire multiple reworkings? Clearly, Butterfly has been made to perform a good deal of cultural work over the past

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<sup>1</sup> John Luther Long, *Madame Butterfly* (New York, 1903). Long’s readers had also encountered an allusion to the story in his 1895 *Miss Cherry Blossom of Tokyo*. That novel opens with a character complaining that Pinkerton himself relates the story of ‘the Pink Geisha’ far too often. This has also been noted by Arthur Groos in ‘Madame Butterfly: The Story’, *this journal*, 3 (1991), 133.

Table 1. Selected works related to 'Madame Butterfly'

1887	<i>Madame Chrysanthème</i> , Pierre Loti, novel
1893	<i>Madame Chrysanthème</i> , mus. André Messager, opera based on Loti
1898	<i>Madame Butterfly</i> , John Luther Long, short story
1900	<i>Madame Butterfly</i> , David Belasco (based on Long), mus. William Furst, melodrama
1901	<i>A Japanese Nightingale</i> , Onoto Watanna (Winnifred Eaton), novel
1903	<i>A Japanese Nightingale</i> , William Young (based on Eaton), mus. N. Clifford Page, melodrama
1904	<i>Madama Butterfly</i> , mus. Giacomo Puccini, opera, revised 1906
1915	<i>Madame Butterfly</i> , dir. Sidney Olcott, silent film
1916	'Poor Butterfly', w. John Golden, mus. Raymond Hubbell, popular song
1918	<i>His Birthright</i> , dir. Sessue Hayakawa, silent film
1919	<i>Harakiri</i> , dir. Fritz Lang, silent film
1922	<i>Toll of the Sea</i> , dir. Chester Franklin, cue sheet by Ernst Luz, silent film
1932	<i>Madame Butterfly</i> , dir. Marion Gering, mus. W. Franke Harling, sound film
1934	<i>One Night of Love</i> , dir. Victor Schertzinger, mus. Schertzinger and Gus Kahn, sound film
1936	<i>Il sogno di Butterfly/Premiere der Butterfly</i> , dir. Carmine Gallone, sound film
1939	<i>First Love</i> , dir. Henry Koster, mus. Charles Previn and H. J. Salter, sound film
1950	<i>The Toast of New Orleans</i> , dir. Norman Taurog, mus. Nicholas Brodsky, sound film
1952	<i>Japanese War Bride</i> , dir. King Vidor, mus. Emil Newman, sound film
1955	<i>Madama Butterfly</i> , dir. Gallone, Italian-Japanese production, film-opera
1957	<i>Sayonara</i> , dir. Joshua Logan, mus. Franz Waxman, sound film
1962	<i>My Geisha</i> , dir. Jack Cardiff, mus. Waxman, sound film
1974	<i>Madama Butterfly</i> , dir. Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, film-opera
1984	<i>Fans</i> , Malcolm McLaren, concept album
1987	<i>Fatal Attraction</i> , dir. Adrian Lyne, mus. Maurice Jarre, sound film
1988	<i>Butterfly</i> , Paul Loewen, novel
1988	<i>M. Butterfly</i> , David Henry Hwang, play
1989	<i>Miss Saigon</i> , mus. Claude-Michel Schönberg, musical
1993	<i>M. Butterfly</i> , dir. David Cronenberg, mus. Howard Shore, sound film
1993	<i>Household Saints</i> , dir. Nancy Savoca, mus. Stephen Endelman, sound film
1995	<i>Madama Butterfly</i> , dir. Frédéric Mitterrand, film-opera
1996	<i>Pinkerton</i> , Weezer, concept album

hundred years, and has always been entangled in the web of race and gender perception in American popular culture. The Butterfly canon and productions of Puccini's opera have both reflected and redirected the mercurial American image of the Japanese. In fact, successive Butterfly works often reflexively worked against the established narrative tradition in order to promote an (allegedly) new position on issues of race, gender and Pacific Rim politics. Hollywood's Butterflies have been repeatedly engaged in such endeavours.

This article is focused on cinematic presentations of the 'Madame Butterfly' tale and on their relationship to Puccini's opera. This focus allows us to raise broader issues of comparative genre analysis. How do film and opera differ in their methods of exotic representation and in their approach to manufacturing realism? And to what extent does the inherent reflexivity faced by new versions of the tale undermine attempts at realism? In addressing such questions, it is important first to consider what the ultimate aims of veristic exoticism might be. Attention to details of local colour is rarely – if ever – motivated solely by entertainment values. Rather, creating persuasive exoticism is more generally useful to the art of persuasion. For example, if a film can convince its audience of the authenticity of its depiction of the Japanese landscape and soundscape, then perhaps the audience is that much more likely to respond with credulity to its portrayal of Japanese women or to its position on the US–Japan political relationship. More broadly still, these works

prompt us to assess the relative roles of aural and visual signification in each genre, and how the expressive capabilities of the aural and the visual are redistributed when film and opera converge.

The intriguing practical and interpretative issues involved in bringing these two media together inspired discussion not only in recent film-opera studies, but also during the early period of film's and opera's intersection. Writing in *Opera Magazine* in 1915, critic E. H. Bierstadt observed: 'The question of putting an operatic work upon the moving picture screen presented some obvious difficulties. As there could be no singing, the action of the whole opera must necessarily be pulled together, and quickened in such a way as to move with a natural rapidity'. Bierstadt offered practical advice for realising film-opera in the silent period: 'If the facilities are at hand, the music of the opera may be played in time to the pictures. The score, of course, has to be arranged in such a way that the music and the pictures will fit perfectly, and in many instances this has been found thoroughly satisfactory'. Bierstadt assumed that the primary motivation for producing film-operas was the desire to achieve a realism in representation not available within the theatre, and noted that, with film, 'it becomes at once possible to produce "Carmen" in Seville or Toledo. "Madame Butterfly" may come to us straight from the heart of Japan'.<sup>2</sup> This assumption of film's ability to bring realism to opera and of the allegedly more 'natural' dramatic pace of cinema has been common over the past century, from a 1919 article on the superiority of the screen over the stage for the presentation of opera to Jeongwon Joe's 1998 reference to the 'clash between cinematic realism and operatic theatricality'.<sup>3</sup> However, filmed versions of the 'Madame Butterfly' tale reveal that cinematic exoticism proves no more realistic than does operatic representation of exotic others.<sup>4</sup>

### 'Proto-cinematic' Butterflies?

In retrospect, Butterfly – like several of her late nineteenth-century exotic sisters – seems destined for the screen: the careful co-ordination of music and visual image present in the earliest versions of her tale appears almost cinematic. Such anachronistic descriptions are inspired not only by products of the nineteenth-century melodrama tradition, but also by works not intended for stage or screen.

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Bierstadt, 'Opera in Moving Pictures', *Opera Magazine*, October 1915, 30–2.

<sup>3</sup> See 'Are Movies Popularizing Opera?' *Theatre*, 29 (May 1919), 297; Jeongwon Joe, 'Opera on Film, Film in Opera: Postmodern Implications of the Cinematic Influence on Opera', Ph.D. diss. (Northwestern University, 1998), 11. Joe's assumption of cinematic realism is also evident in her following statement: 'In opera-film [. . .] singing becomes alien because it appears within the realistic frame of cinema'. Joe draws upon Siegfried Kracauer's description of feeling 'caught in a terrific clash between cinematic realism and operatic magic' while experiencing a film-opera. However, Kracauer states earlier that the 'difference in unreality [. . .] between staged and filmed opera, is negligible'. Kracauer, 'Opera on the Screen', *Film Culture*, 1 (March 1955), 19–20.

<sup>4</sup> On the degree of realism found in two famous film-operas of *Madama Butterfly*, see Helen M. Greenwald, 'Issues of Authenticity in Two Films of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*: Ponnelle (1974) and Mitterrand (1995)', in *Das Musiktheater in den Audiovisuellen Medien*, ed. Peter Csobádi *et al.* (Anif and Salzburg, 2001), 295–305.

For example, Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* is so heavily illustrated that in some sections his text functions as commentary on the pictures, in a fashion parallel to the role of intertitles in silent film. Loti's geisha sings compulsively throughout the novel – 'melancholy' music permeates the very atmosphere of Loti's Japan – and the French protagonist's evolving opinion of the geisha's singing serves as our clearest gauge of his feelings for her.<sup>5</sup> As we read his descriptions and view the illustrations of her music-making we are prompted to audiate our own version of her exotic song.

More clearly 'cinematic', the experience of David Belasco's 1900 staged melodrama resembled that of later silent film or even of the earlier lantern slide presentations in its lighting effects and co-ordination of music with image. The manuscript score of William Furst's incidental music for Belasco's play includes detailed dynamic markings and other indications to the musicians to ensure that the music would closely underscore the dialogue, action and stage images throughout the work.<sup>6</sup> The most celebrated feature of this production was the (allegedly) fourteen-minute non-verbal section in which lighting and music realised the passing of Butterfly's night of anticipation.<sup>7</sup> Furst's note for this scene offers cues precisely co-ordinating the music with the changing lights. Similarly, notes contained in the manuscript piano score indicate that the prelude to Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* offered a series of drops presenting scenes of exotic Japan accompanied by Furst's

<sup>5</sup> Music was central to Loti's experience of Japan and to his preconceived image of this exotic land: 'Even the woman's melancholy voice, still to be heard behind the paper partition, was so evidently the way they should sing, these musicians I had so often seen painted in amazing colours on rice paper, half closing their dreamy eyes in the midst of impossibly large flowers. Long before I came to it, I had perfectly pictured this Japan to myself'. Towards the end of the novel, the protagonist decides to use the word 'chamécen' rather than 'guitar' to denote Chrysanthemum's instrument – this switch to an authentic term is framed as a sign that he now feels 'almost at home' in Japan. Pierre Loti, *Madame Chrysanthème*, trans. Laura Ensor (London, 1897), 43, 280–2. Finally, nearly 10 per cent of the novel's illustrations feature a drawing of the *shamisen*. André Messager's 1893 operatic setting of Loti's tale abounds in Orientalist sung songs and Chrysanthemum's exotic singing plays a major role in the drama. The hero, Pierre, is drawn to the exotic woman in Act I by her charming song – shades of *Lakmé* Act II. He is infuriated by her public musical performance in Act III and resolves to abandon her, only to be soothed once again by her 'pure, silvery song' in Act IV.

<sup>6</sup> Furst's manuscript score is contained in the David Belasco Collection of incidental music at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. Furst (1852–1917) composed for many of Belasco's productions and was a major figure in San Francisco theatre and then on Broadway in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He composed several light operas and the score for Cecil B. DeMille's 1916 silent film 'Joan the Woman' which starred Geraldine Farrar. In addition to his Orientalist works for Belasco, Furst wrote the music for the 'Chinese play' *The Yellow Jacket* by George C. Hazelton and Benrimo. Walter Pritchard Eaton complained in a 4 November 1912 review that the incessant music for this production was 'played on instruments approximating the Chinese, and is made up of Chinese rhythms, square-toed and monotonous'. This review is reproduced at [www.wayneturney.20m.com/yellowjackethistory.htm](http://www.wayneturney.20m.com/yellowjackethistory.htm) (accessed 5 August 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Belasco claimed that his 'most successful effort in appealing to the imaginations of those who have sat before my stage' occurred in this scene. David Belasco, *The Theatre Through Its Stage Door* (New York, 1919), 238.

music.<sup>8</sup> Belasco's *The Darling of the Gods*, a 1902 play set in Japan, also began with a series of still images accompanied by music and Belasco repeatedly insisted that the success of both plays was primarily due to his innovative lighting effects and their musical accompaniment.<sup>9</sup> Belasco exhibited an auteur's concern with musical details: 'If the play has a musical accompaniment, I read it to the composer I have engaged, indicating its moods and feeling. He must interpret every scene and speech as if he were writing the score for a song'.<sup>10</sup> Blanche Bates, the performer who premièred the title roles in both Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* and *The Darling of the Gods*, discussed the musical quality of Belasco's production style in 1903 and related that 'no one is like Mr. Belasco as far as regards times. Everything is timed to a "T". The play runs to music'.<sup>11</sup>

A. Nicholas Vardac has claimed that Belasco's 'popularity continued into the years of the early film because his theatrical technique was highly cinematic'.<sup>12</sup> Of course, the 'cinematic' elements of Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* were actually indebted to the nineteenth-century melodrama tradition, and Belasco's production style – and the tradition he represented – influenced the production of silent film.<sup>13</sup> Silent film also modelled itself on such melodramas as Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* in its use of music. As Anne Dhu Shapiro notes, 'the functions of music in melodrama were transferred very directly into music for the early silent film. Several films were in fact made of the most popular melodramas. Theater musicians went from stage productions to making live music for the silent film. Not surprisingly, they brought some of their traditions and styles of music making with them'.<sup>14</sup> Belasco addressed the relationship between theatre and cinema himself in a chapter entitled 'The

<sup>8</sup> A notice appearing in the *New York Times* on 11 November 1906 (page SMA 2) proclaimed that the upcoming New York première of Puccini's opera at the Garden Theatre would offer a setting far more elaborate than that employed by Belasco in order 'to carry the atmosphere of Japan with even greater fidelity and picturesqueness'. The article also announced that, as in Belasco's production, a series of tableau curtains would be presented during Puccini's overture.

<sup>9</sup> Belasco collaborated with John Luther Long in writing this play and Furst again composed the incidental music. The stage props included several Japanese musical instruments and the *shamisen* was featured in the accompanying music. This exotic tragedy was burlesqued in 1903 as *The Darling of the Gallery Gods*.

<sup>10</sup> Belasco, *The Theatre*, 61.

<sup>11</sup> '“Better to ‘Score’ Than to Be a ‘Star’”, Says Miss Blanche Bates', *The Morning Telegraph*, 17 May 1903, part 3, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> A. Nicholas Vardac, *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith* (New York, 1968), 108.

<sup>13</sup> Cecil B. DeMille was particularly influenced by Belasco's strikingly visual style. After seeing Belasco's *The Darling of the Gods*, DeMille began extensive preparations to produce a film version of the play as a follow-up to his own foray into Japanese exoticism, *The Cheat* (1915). See materials collected in 'PERSONAL: Autobiography files – Research', box 13 folder 1, in the Cecil B. DeMille Archives, Brigham Young University, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library.

<sup>14</sup> Anne Dhu Shapiro, 'Action Music in American Pantomime and Melodrama, 1730–1913', *American Music*, 2 (1984), 66. For a radically revisionary view on the purported connections between early cinema and nineteenth-century staged melodrama, see Rick Altman, 'The Silence of the Silents', *The Musical Quarterly*, 80 (1996), 648–718. Altman's argument focuses primarily on cinema history prior to 1915 and calls into question our assumptions regarding the presence of music in the experience of early film.

Drama's Flickering Bogy – The Movies'. He argued that 'motion pictures have been a parasite feeding upon the arts of the theatre' and that films were not a direct threat to staged performance because the flickering images on the screen could only achieve a superficial realism.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps Belasco's confidence *vis-à-vis* the emerging cinema stemmed from the fact that his theatre already offered stunning images and musical accompaniment, as well as the audible dialogue absent from the silent film.<sup>16</sup>

Like Belasco, Puccini has also inspired repeated comparisons with cinema. Peter Franklin has observed that 'long before the advent of the sound film, German critics had used the term "Kino-Oper" with reference to Puccini'.<sup>17</sup> Franklin himself has pointed to Puccini's *Tosca*, in particular, as illustrating 'the proto-cinematic role of music' in opera and has imagined an ideal film version of *Tosca* in which 'the actors would have spoken their lines above Puccini's music, turning the opera into the literal melodrama that veristic literature unerringly sought when it first ventured onto the stage heading, via the opera-house, for the cinema screen'.<sup>18</sup> Any 'cinematic elements' in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, however, are likely traceable to the inchoate 'cinematic' features of Belasco's melodrama.

Puccini famously understood not a word of the dialogue when he experienced Belasco's production in London. Contrary to Belasco's oft-quoted and inaccurate demurral – 'I never believed he [Puccini] did see "Madame Butterfly" that first night. He only heard the music he was going to write' – Puccini's attention must also have been focused on the relationship between Belasco's images and Furst's music. In a 1916 article in the *New York Tribune* H. E. Krehbiel presents 'Japanese' tunes from Furst's and Puccini's scores. He offers no comparative commentary beyond the following: 'If Signor Puccini had needed the suggestion that Japanese music was necessary for a Japanese play (which of course he did not) he might have received

<sup>15</sup> Belasco, *The Theatre*, 205.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Osborne notes that Belasco 'specialized in stage pictures of an almost cinematic realism' and Lise-Lone Marker states that 'for Belasco, as for Appia, lighting played the part of visual music, not only in the service of illusion but also of poetic vision'. See Osborne, *The Complete Operas of Puccini* (New York, 1981), 155, and Marker, *David Belasco: Naturalism in the American Theatre* (Princeton, 1975), 86. Helen M. Greenwald has discussed the visual elements in both Belasco's and Puccini's stage designs in 'Realism on the Opera Stage: Belasco, Puccini, and the California Sunset', in *Opera in Context: Essays on Historical Staging from the Late Renaissance to the Time of Puccini*, ed. Mark A. Radice (Portland, Or., 1998), 279–96, and in 'Picturing Cio-Cio-San: House, Screen, and Ceremony in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*', *this journal*, 12 (2001), 237–59.

<sup>17</sup> Franklin refers to Artur Seidl's 1910/11 article 'Madame Butterfly und Tiefland'. See Peter Franklin, 'Distant Sounds – Fallen Music: *Der ferne Klang* as "Woman's Opera"?' *this journal*, 3 (1991), 160. A more recent German study has viewed Puccini's operas from a similar perspective: Jürgen Leukel, 'Puccini's kinematographische Technik', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 143 (1982), 24–6.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Franklin, 'Movies as Operas? (Behind the Great Divide)', in *A Night in at the Opera: Media Representations of Opera*, ed. Jeremy Tambling (London, 1994), 83, 88. In a 1992 production of *Tosca* directed by Giuseppe Patroni Griffi, the pursuit of *verismo* took a different form from that imagined by Franklin. In this live telecast production, each act of the opera was performed at the specific time of day and location in Rome as indicated in the work's stage directions.

it when he saw Mr. Belasco's play in London'.<sup>19</sup> Although my study of Furst's score has revealed no obvious signs of borrowing by Puccini, certain musical parallels are evident between the two works.<sup>20</sup> Both Furst and Puccini employ running semiquaver figures and prominent grace-note ornamentation in their overtures. Both turn to a lilting 6/8 metre for Butterfly's and Suzuki's preparation for Pinkerton's expected imminent return. In Furst's score this joyous preparation music returns near the play's end as Suzuki exits sobbing. Similarly, in Puccini's opera we hear musical allusions to the homecoming preparation as Suzuki exhorts Pinkerton to look at the scattered flowers as evidence of Butterfly's tragic faith. Finally, both Furst and Puccini underscored Butterfly's pantomimed suicide with a martial pentatonic melody. These detailed correspondences may well be coincidental, but they nevertheless point to the rampant intertextuality evident in the Butterfly corpus and caution against attempts to pin down a single Ur-version of this tale.

The first silent films of the 'Madame Butterfly' narrative tended to turn back to Long's story for their plot and dialogue and to sources other than Puccini for their musical *japonisme*. This is particularly true of Sidney Olcott's 1915 *Madame Butterfly*, a vehicle for Mary Pickford. This is not to say that the opera is entirely absent from our experience of this film, nor to suggest that the absence of Puccini indicates a more general musical abdication. While it is possible that some screenings of this silent film were accompanied by excerpts from Puccini's opera, either played on a phonograph or by live musicians, it is more likely that the organist or ensemble drew upon musicals and Tin Pan Alley songs dealing with Japan and on published silent film music anthologies.<sup>21</sup> Nick Browne has stated that the 'erasure [in the 1915 film]

<sup>19</sup> H. E. Krehbiel, 'The Tragic Outcome of "Madame Butterfly"', *New York Tribune*, 22 October 1916. See also chapter 12 in his *A Second Book of Operas: Their Histories, Their Plots and Their Music* (New York, 1917), 169–89. After suggesting that Messenger's *Madame Chrysanthème* failed because its presentation of Japan was too authentic, without having himself heard or seen that opera, Krehbiel praises Puccini's use of Japanese tunes: 'Japanese music is arid and angular, and yet so great is Puccini's skill in combining creative imagination and reflection that he knew how to make it blossom like a rose. Pity he could not wholly overcome its rhythmical monotony. Japanese melody runs almost uninterruptedly through his instrumental score'. Early twentieth-century critics rarely hesitated to pass judgement on the use of 'Japanese' music, even though they most likely had little direct experience of it. For example, a review in *The Eagle* (collected in the *Madame Butterfly* clipping file at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts) of Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* as performed at the Montauk Theater states: 'The effect is increased by the incidental use of Japanese music in the pentatonic scale like the Chinese, but without the barbaric crashing discords which make the Chinese music hideous'. Here the critic casually assumes Furst's incidental music to be somehow 'Japanese'.

<sup>20</sup> Betty Ewart Evans suggests that Puccini was influenced by Belasco's and Furst's decisions on where to use music in the drama and by the style of music they employed. However, she does not compare Furst's and Puccini's music in detail. See Evans, 'The Nature of Belasco's Use of Music in Representative Productions', Ph.D. diss. (University of Oregon, 1966).

<sup>21</sup> Michal Grover-Friedlander has stated that in 'films relating to opera, highlights from the opera's orchestral music were often used to accompany the image on the screen for additional effect'. See Grover-Friedlander, ' "The Phantom of the Opera": The Lost Voice of Opera in Silent Film', *this journal*, 11 (1999), 180. My research suggests, however, that the cue sheets for silent films relating to opera were just as likely to ignore the opera's music entirely.



Fig. 1: Mary Pickford as the silent singing geisha. Famous Players publicity still for *Madame Butterfly* (1915) (courtesy of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences).

of Puccini's music and the singing, with their co-ordinated power of elevation, significantly alters the conditions of reception. It is manifestly a silent film'.<sup>22</sup> This is a surprising assertion. Perhaps even more so than with other films of the period, the 1915 *Madame Butterfly* appears to call for musical accompaniment.<sup>23</sup> The film prompts the realisation of diegetic musical performance in three sections. Butterfly sings and plays the *shamisen* twice in the film and Pinkerton and Butterfly meet at a theatrical performance that resembles low-budget kabuki (see Fig. 1). I have discovered one published cue sheet for this film which offers a suggestion of the music likely heard at its screenings.<sup>24</sup> This 1916 cue sheet draws heavily on Sidney Jones' *The Geisha*, a late nineteenth-century British musical comedy that was second only to *The Mikado* in popular *japonisme*, as well as on several Tin Pan Alley songs. None of Puccini's music is called for. Similarly, Ernst Luz's compiled score for the

<sup>22</sup> Nick Browne, 'The Undoing of the *Other Woman*: *Madame Butterfly* in the Discourse of American Orientalism', in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*, ed. Daniel Bernardi (New Brunswick, 1996), 245. Browne notes that none of the reviews of the 1915 film mentions any music. He appears to accept this unremarkable fact as evidence that no music was heard during screenings of the film (236).

<sup>23</sup> Again, see Rick Altman, 'The Silence of the Silents', on the apparent absence of music in earlier cinema.

<sup>24</sup> Wesley Ray Burroughs, 'With the Movie Organist', *Diapason*, 1 February 1916, 3.

1922 *Toll of the Sea* – a version of the 'Madame Butterfly' tale set in China – also avoids Puccini.<sup>25</sup> Luz explains in his preface to the score: 'While the music selected must continually suggest the Chinese or Japanese character, nevertheless, care must be taken in proper programming so that it does not become tiresome'. He specifically warns that Puccini's music should not be employed to accompany the film without the publisher's permission and calls for a Chinese gong during the introduction to the pieces 'By the Japanese Sea' and 'Japanese Legende'. Puccini clearly created the most famous soundtrack for the Madame Butterfly legend, but his influence on later manifestations of the tale was rarely straightforward.

My focus in the remainder of this article will be on two sound films, Paramount's 1932 *Madame Butterfly* and that studio's 1962 *My Geisha*. Neither of these works are film-operas, i.e., screened productions of an opera. Instead, each incorporates musical and narrative material from Puccini's opera and simultaneously comments upon it. Produced near the beginning of the sound era, the 1932 film struggles to co-opt the opera and thereby create a fully cinematic Butterfly. *My Geisha*, created three decades later, aspires to subvert Orientalist representation by reflecting back upon Puccini's and Hollywood's Butterflies with hip sophistication. I will concentrate on the complex relationship between the music heard in these films and in Puccini's opera, and on how pre-existent versions of the Madame Butterfly narrative are reworked to promote and shape prevailing race and gender ideology. I will also consider the relationship between operatic and cinematic Orientalist representation more generally and will investigate whether, in its bid to project exotic realism in both sound and image, film succeeds in surpassing the experience of staged Orientalist opera. In addition, these films prompt a discussion of the differences between opera's ability to stage itself as opera-within-an-opera and film's potential for reflexive screenings. Both the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* and 1962 *My Geisha* point back to earlier presentations of the tale and seek to capture the 'real' Butterfly on film.

### '*La Ghesha canterà*'?: Avoiding opera

In most versions of the narrative Butterfly is a singing geisha. She does not sing, however, in the 1932 Paramount sound film. Similarly, Butterfly only briefly sings in Puccini's opera. After Sharpless suggests that Pinkerton will never return and that she should marry Yamadori, Puccini's Butterfly brings out her child and, imagining a return to her life as a performing geisha, cries out 'E come fece già / la Ghesha canterà!' ('As in the past, the geisha will sing again!'). Although her momentary acting out of this possible future performance has been referred to as a sung song by some, I do not believe the designation is warranted. Butterfly's musical style does

<sup>25</sup> Ernst Luz, *The Toll of the Sea: A 'Luz' Music Score* (New York, 1923). This film starred Anna May Wong in the title role and was the first two-colour Technicolor feature. This version of the tale is particularly notable for the intensely poignant scene in which Lotus Flower (the Butterfly character) hands over her son to his new white American mother. The adaptation was made by a female writer, Frances Marion. This film has recently been made available on DVD with Martin Marks performing Luz's score: *Treasures from American film archives*, vol. 2 (National Film Preservation Foundation, 2000).

not change to signal a diegetic performance and the text suggests that, in her imagination, she is soliciting her audience rather than performing for it. In the original version of the opera Butterfly sang twice to her child, whereas in the final version she sings only a brief lullaby as she ascends the stairs with the boy following her night of anticipation. In Long's story Butterfly sings several songs, including a lullaby that Pinkerton had frequently sung to her: 'Rog-a-by, bebbly, off in Japan, / You jus' a picture off of a fan'.<sup>26</sup> Butterfly did fulfil her role as a singing geisha in the draft versions of the 1932 film.<sup>27</sup> The preliminary scripts also reveal other intended vocal performances. For example, the Americans' arrival at the port was to be heralded by the 'Star Spangled Banner being sung by shrill boyish voices, mostly off key'. The shot of these Japanese schoolboys was described as follows: 'PAN to get the effect of the bland, expressionless faces, the mechanically moving lips'. In the final shooting script only Pinkerton sings.

One might assume that in 1932 Hollywood would have been eager finally to realise Thomas Edison's dream of merging opera directly with film. Producers frequently had been interested in opera during the silent period and had used opera to raise the cultural status of the movies.<sup>28</sup> In addition, 1932 has been identified as the year when sound film began to embrace the use of non-diegetic music.<sup>29</sup> Rather than creating a film of Puccini's opera, however, the producers of the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* appear to have been somewhat opera-phobic.<sup>30</sup> From their initial negotiations with Ricordi it is clear that they never intended to include the vocal music. In

<sup>26</sup> In Belasco's play Blanche Bates sang two of these songs on stage in the role of Butterfly. In Long's 'Purple-Eyes', a woman of mixed parentage sings 'Long down behind the Suwanee River' which causes the American male to laugh and join in. Long, 'Purple Eyes', in *Madame Butterfly* (New York, 1907), 112–13.

<sup>27</sup> The drafts of the script for this film are housed at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Research Center, Los Angeles (hereafter designated by AMPAS).

<sup>28</sup> See Grover-Friedlander, ' "The Phantom of the Opera" ', 179–92. Also see Alexander Thomas Simpson, 'Opera on Film: A Study of the History and the Aesthetic Principles and Conflicts of a Hybrid Genre', Ph.D. diss. (University of Kentucky, 1990), and David Schroeder, *Cinema's Illusions, Opera's Allure: The Operatic Impulse in Film* (New York and London, 2002).

<sup>29</sup> See Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, 1987), 42, 51.

<sup>30</sup> A 4 May 1937 unsigned letter found in the 'Production Materials' Folder 1, *Madame Butterfly* (1932), at AMPAS reveals that Paramount considered producing a 'picture opera' version of the opera in 1937. The anonymous Paramount executive wrote: 'The thing has been in embryo for years. Boris Morros has surveyed it from every angle and discussed it with every visiting celebrity up to and including Stravinsky'. The writer explains that Paramount has not yet pursued the project because 'there has always been some doubt as to the advisability of our attempting an opera on the screen'. An article in the 21 July 1937 issue of *Variety* entitled ' "Poor Butterfly" Gets Jap Rewrite and Modernization; Par to Produce?' offers more information on this abandoned project. This report from Tokyo reveals that the Japanese conductor Hidemaro Konoe 'has completed a modern and Japanized version of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*'. In Konoe's version – an attempt to improve upon the 1932 film – Pinkerton is an American musician who meets Cho-Cho San on a musical tour of Japan. Cho-Cho San pursues a career as a vocalist and gives a recital in America with Pinkerton conducting. The couple is united at the end. Konoe reportedly proposed to rewrite Puccini's first act music himself 'to impart more Japanese spirit [. . .] to retain the spirit in which Puccini wrote, but be more genuinely Japanese'. He also suggested that all scenes offensive to the Japanese be eliminated, that a Japanese actress play the title role, and that the film be shot as much as possible in Japan.

fact, Paramount attempted to disassociate the film from the opera as clearly as possible in its publicity materials. Exhibitors were instructed that the film was 'NOT a picturization of the opera – the music does not play an important part in the production, furnishing only the incidental background. Say nothing about the opera or its music in your campaign [ . . . ] but bill it as a romance, for that's what it is!'<sup>31</sup> While music is heard throughout almost every minute of the film, the volume of the music is often quite low. By 1932 at least some Hollywood executives were concerned that a film-opera would limit rather than expand their potential audience.<sup>32</sup>

The 1932 *Madame Butterfly* is primarily a 'film-melodrama' in which the spoken dialogue is heard over a continuous orchestral accompaniment and much of the on-screen movement appears choreographed. Rather than openly embracing Puccini, the film harnesses his music to support its own version of the tale. The credits acknowledge both Long's and Belasco's versions and production files reveal that the 1915 silent film was also consulted. However, this film goes far beyond the short story, play, opera and silent film by considerably fleshing out the narrative. In particular, we are privy to Pinkerton's and Butterfly's domestic life to a far greater extent than in the prior versions.<sup>33</sup> We hear sections of Puccini's music – both at their original narrative positions and transposed to new episodes – along with new Orientalist music by the Hollywood composer W. Franke Harling.<sup>34</sup> Some sections of the film appear to illustrate Marcia Citron's term 'opera in prose', i.e., films that employ operatic music beneath dialogue that is based on the opera's literary source.<sup>35</sup> Alternately, certain scenes of the film do qualify as 'film-opera' in that we hear Puccini's music in the same narrative spot accompanying the same dramatic action. The screening of these purely orchestral sections from the opera, and others without dialogue but supported with Harling's music, also resembles silent film. In a memo the film's producer Ben Schulberg wrote: 'We have played substantial

<sup>31</sup> Bound copies of the Paramount Press Sheets for this film (dated 30 December 1932) are held at AMPAS.

<sup>32</sup> Executives at Columbia studios were clearly more committed opera buffs, as evidenced by the 1934 film *One Night of Love*, in which a performance of *Madama Butterfly* at the conclusion finally brings together the film's would-be lovers, an American soprano and a (hitherto) effete Italian opera coach named Monteverdi. The 1936 Italian-German film *Il sogno di Butterfly/Premiere der Butterfly*, also released by Columbia and directed by Carmine Gallone, went a step further by presenting a fictionalised portrait of Rosina Storchio, the soprano who first sang Butterfly, and of the première of Puccini's opera. In this version the soprano's lover leaves her behind in Europe to pursue his own career in America. She gives birth to their child and waits in vain for his return. She takes on the part of Butterfly, only too painfully aware of its reflection of her own life. Her former lover, mindful of what he has done and trapped in an opera box with his American wife, is made to suffer through her performance of the opera in German in the US much as Claudius suffers through the play-within-a-play in *Hamlet*. However, she forgives him backstage, and even thanks him for causing her a terrible anguish that led to her best role and performance.

<sup>33</sup> This version of the tale is thus the closest parallel to Loti's story of a Euro-American man's affair with a geisha. The bulk of Loti's autobiographical novel focuses on his daily impressions of life in Japan and his evolving opinions of his Japanese wife.

<sup>34</sup> Harling's papers had been held at the Gavilan College Library in Gilroy, CA. However, the boxes containing his papers were lost before I was able to consult them.

<sup>35</sup> Marcia Citron, *Opera on Screen* (New Haven, 2000), 33.

portions of the story in pantomime with a minimum of dialogue [. . .] which should make for effective picturization, all the more so because of the Puccini music which we will play against these scenes'.<sup>36</sup> (The passing of the night sequence, which employs Puccini's music and ten graceful dissolves, is particularly illustrative of this intention.)

Despite Paramount's professed opera-phobia, the soundtrack proves operatic not only in its use of Puccini's score but also in the style and form of Harling's original music. For instance, Harling employs Puccini's 'curse motif' for his own dramatic purposes and creates his own leitmotifs for the American consul Sharpless and for Pinkerton.<sup>37</sup> A good deal of Puccini's music is heard in the film and often quite prominently. Most of the major themes are employed, save Pinkerton's aria of Yankee bravado. (The significance of this omission will be considered later.) Also absent from the soundtrack are sections of the operatic score in which Puccini conspicuously reworked Japanese folk tunes. Since Harling did not draw upon Japanese folk tunes himself, we actually hear less 'Japanese' music in the film than in the opera.<sup>38</sup> The use of Puccini's music and the co-ordination between music and image in the film's Main Title sequence suggest that we are about to view a screened production of the opera. The film begins with Puccini's orchestral introduction heard in its entirety. We first see the logo for Paramount Studios as the music starts, and then view a still image of Mount Fuji. This visual rhyme thus offers a reflexive wink at the very start of the film. Puccini's fugal music works closely with the succession of still images in this title sequence. The change from one shot to the next is achieved by the opening and closing of a fan covering the entire screen. The first fan movement occurs with the second fugal entry and the third fan appears to open and close with the ascending and descending lines heard at Puccini's rehearsal no. 3.<sup>39</sup> The two stills of the male leads in uniform appear with the brassy music at reh. 4 in Puccini's score. As the title sequence ends, there is a brief silence before Harling's music is heard. It is only at this point that one realises this will not be a film-opera.

Puccini's opera offers only one extended love scene between Pinkerton and Butterfly. In contrast, the 1932 film shows several shorter intimate scenes between

<sup>36</sup> The memo was addressed to Sam Katz and dated 5 October 1932. All correspondence cited here concerning the production of this film is collected in 'Production Materials Folders', Folder 1, *Madame Butterfly* (1932), AMPAS.

<sup>37</sup> Some critics argued that the film was a failure because its story was too operatic for the cinema, while others suggested that its cinematic realisation was not operatic enough. For example, Philip K. Scheuer wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* (26 December 1932): 'The picture is an opera denuded of operatics. Its story, completely lacking in contrast or counterpoint, is eminently unsuited to the cinema – besides having been robbed of any possible suspense by interminable imitations through the years'.

<sup>38</sup> This is not to imply that Puccini's own Orientalist orchestrations resemble Japanese traditional music to a significant degree. A good deal of scholarship has been devoted to detailing Puccini's borrowings of Japanese melodies and to tracing their sources. However, much of this scholarship tends to assume that pitch and melodic shape – as opposed to timbre and inflection – are of paramount importance in assessing Puccini's approximations of Japanese music.

<sup>39</sup> These rehearsal numbers refer to the 1907 piano-vocal score published by Ricordi.

the couple and thereby establishes the exotic woman's ideal nature. Harling drew upon Puccini's Act I love duet music for these scenes, most often leaving Puccini's vocal melodies out. He occasionally used Puccini's music in precisely parallel dramatic locations. For example, in the film Pinkerton first encounters Butterfly at Goro's teahouse and pursues her in a moonlit garden. At the moment when it is clear that Pinkerton is entirely smitten with her, when he realises that she is completely innocent of the ways of love and seems eager to please, Harling employed Puccini's soaring theme (reh. 128) heard in the opera just before Butterfly's plea 'Vogliatemi bene, un bene piccolino, un bene da bambino' ('Love me, just a very little, as you would a baby'). In a later scene in the film, as we see Suzuki preparing the bridal chamber, we hear the music from Act I in the opera as Butterfly undresses for their nuptial night. In order to match the faster dramatic pace of the film's bridal chamber scene and to reach Puccini's musical climax at the moment of Butterfly and Pinkerton's on-screen kiss, Harling radically cut and pasted the opera's love duet material. In general, film moves at a much quicker (but not necessarily more realistic) dramatic rate and unfolds on a smaller dramatic scale than does opera. Harling skilfully negotiated these differences in creating his score.

In contrast to Long's short story and to Puccini's opera, the 1932 *Pinkerton* does return to confront Butterfly directly and to explain to her that he is saying farewell for good. In this scene Harling poignantly employed excerpts from the operatic Butterfly's 'Un bel di' aria and from the Act I love duet – a dramatic decision as effective as the return of the *bacio* theme in Verdi's *Otello*. For Pinkerton's arrival Harling chose the precise moment in Puccini's score when Butterfly describes what she will do when Pinkerton returns and then acts out what she hopes he will say. We hear the musical climax from Act II reh. 16 as we see Butterfly embrace Pinkerton on screen while he stands starkly unresponsive. Finally, as Butterfly formally bows and slowly re-enters the house alone, closing the sliding *shoji* for the last time, we hear the music from the very end of Act I in Puccini's opera when the operatic lovers retire indoors together. Harling carefully reworked Puccini's music to powerful effect so that it appears to have been composed to underscore this very sequence.

This film reflects back upon the *Madame Butterfly* tradition not only in its use of Long, Belasco and Puccini, but also in its references to Tin Pan Alley's *japonisme*. Golden's and Hubbell's 1916 song 'Poor Butterfly' was perhaps the most widely known version of the *Madame Butterfly* narrative in the United States in the early 1930s. In the film the song is heard diegetically and inscribed with a new significance during a scene set in a New York City restaurant. As Pinkerton sits glumly, his fiancée draws his attention to a robin on a branch outside the window. At this significant moment, we hear an instrumental rendition of the chorus of 'Poor Butterfly', presumably played by an unseen ensemble or phonograph in the restaurant. In the song the text of this section is in the voice of the lamenting Japanese woman. This music might be intended to remind us and Pinkerton of Butterfly and her pining voice, of *her* suffering. However, since we see Pinkerton's dejected demeanour and hear *his* dispirited speech, the tune becomes the accompaniment to his feelings of guilt and discomfort. The sequence ends exactly with the

end of the song. Such blatant reflexivity, similar to the Paramount and Mount Fuji visual rhyme mentioned above, would seem to undermine the film's diegesis and cinema's vaunted realism. By drawing attention to the Butterfly canon in this way, the film simultaneously asserts its authority to tell the tale anew and betrays its inability to escape its predecessors and to claim genuineness.

The only vocal music heard in the entire 1932 film is Pinkerton's diegetic singing of Harling's and Rainger's newly composed song, 'My Flower of Japan'. Thus, the film's most 'operatic' sequence avoids Puccini entirely. A significant number of the Tin Pan Alley songs dealing with Japan in the first decades of the twentieth century were set in the voice of an American male longing to return to his Japanese lover.<sup>40</sup> This song's lyrics and its appearances in the film imply its pre-existence. Typical of Tin Pan Alley's *japonisme*, the lyrics reveal that the male protagonist has been inspired by Japanese art objects and has dreamed of Japanese women: 'Long have I waited to hold you enfold you, My flower of Japan, You have created a dream world, my dream world, A picture off a fan'. We first hear an excerpt of the tune whistled by Pinkerton in his cabin as he packs up to disembark. Oddly, he begins to whistle the song just as he picks up a photograph of his American sweetheart after agreeing to join his buddy Barton for an exotic night on the town. Perhaps this whistling offers a subtle suggestion that the white woman will eventually replace or become his 'flower of Japan'. Since the song and its lyrics have not yet been heard by the film's audience, any irony is lost. In retrospect, however, this whistling suggests that Pinkerton has brought Tin Pan Alley's images of Japanese women with him in his mental baggage.<sup>41</sup>

The entire song is sung by Pinkerton – Cary Grant drawing upon his musical theatre experience – only once in the film. In the previous scene Butterfly has learned by accident at dinner that Pinkerton will be departing for the US the very next morning. The sequence in question begins with silence and a shot of Butterfly praying. The silence is momentary and the rest of the sequence was cut precisely to allow for a complete orchestral statement of the song immediately followed by Pinkerton's vocal rendition with orchestral accompaniment. After Pinkerton tries to comfort Butterfly, and she attempts to perform her domestic duties with a smile, she asks him to sing his song 'same as always, please'. Her request is delivered just as the orchestra reaches the end of the song and Pinkerton complies by joining the orchestra for the repeat. The diegetic/non-diegetic divide appears to be collapsed, or is at least boldly transgressed several times in the sequence, most obviously when Pinkerton begins to sing with the unheard(?) orchestra. During the first orchestral

<sup>40</sup> See my forthcoming studies 'Strains of *Japonisme* in Tin Pan Alley and on Broadway, 1890–1930' and 'Pinkerton's Lament'; a preliminary version of the former was delivered at the November 2000 Society for American Music conference, and of the latter at the 2003 meeting of the American Musicological Society.

<sup>41</sup> An early draft synopsis reveals that the film was to have followed this reflexive path even further. We were to have seen a 'half caste' child at the dock and to have heard an officer wisecrack: 'Well, I know one thing [. . .] the Navy's been here before'. We hear the entire song as an instrumental background underneath Pinkerton's and Butterfly's initial dialogue in the teahouse garden after he catches her and we first hear a line of the lyrics as Pinkerton returns home from work singing of his Japanese flower.

statement of the song, the background music crescendos with Pinkerton's movements as he helps Butterfly rise following her prayer. Not only do most of the movements of Pinkerton and Butterfly appear choreographed, the camera movement is also closely co-ordinated with the music. The camera pans smoothly during the longest held note in the melody and the cutting rhythm is in synch with the beginnings of musical phrases. Pinkerton's song ends and the screen fades to black as we hear Butterfly's violent sobbing. In this film the most intensely emotional scenes are treated most like a film-opera.

In the film's final sequence we hear a full minute without music – the longest musical silence in the entire film – as we see and hear Butterfly offering a final prayer at her altar. Unlike in the opera, where she is interrupted by her child, Butterfly remains alone in the film for the final two and a half minutes as she prepares for death. This allows the film to focus more intensely on the pathetic suicide of this exotic woman. Puccini's music begins as Butterfly picks up her father's sword, a movement punctuated by Harling with a gong crash. We hear fourteen bars starting from Puccini's reh. 55. After a brief musical silence for Butterfly's final line 'I love you for always', the final eleven bars of the opera mark her death as the camera pulls back and the screen then fades to black. Butterfly's singing voice remains silent to the end in this sequence. As it was displaced by Pinkerton's singing earlier in the film, the operatic Butterfly's final lines are taken here by the violins.<sup>42</sup> She dies at the foot of Pinkerton's chair where we had earlier witnessed her dance attendance on him like an eager puppy.

### **'What do your excellencies desire?': Avoiding exotic possibilities**

In the publicity materials generated for *Madame Butterfly*, Paramount professed an ardent desire to achieve exotic veracity. Such claims, presupposing a definable and attainable 'exotic realism', have been made throughout Hollywood's history and are most often spurious. For example, the film-makers sought to suggest exotic authenticity by crediting the Japanese dancer Michio Ito as both Technical Adviser and Dance Director. However, an inter-office memo from the producer dated 28 October 1932 reveals that the decision to credit Ito was made in order to disarm expected criticism of the film's inaccurate presentation of Japanese customs. Taking for granted a general American ignorance of Japanese culture, the producer stated that by citing Ito's assistance they would 'undoubtedly lead many a critic, who might otherwise think and state we are wrong, to fear to present such a conclusion'. A 16 December 1932 review of the film in *Variety* reveals that, at least for one critic, their stratagem backfired: 'Picture at times becomes too technical, under direction of Michio Ito, Japanese dancer. There can be little fault with the authenticity of Japanese customs, but they clutter up the picture and drag the tempo to a snail's pace'. We learn from a 'ready-to-publish' article included in the film's publicity

<sup>42</sup> In the standard Hollywood practice of that time, the film immediately blasts forth 'Un bel di' for the end credits – erasing the tragedy and any uncomfortable feelings of guilt, and proclaiming hope, or perhaps offering a final sentimental reminder of Butterfly's anticipation.

package that ‘thirty Japanese girls’ were hired for the film. Despite Hollywood’s best intentions to hire the authentic other, ‘it was soon found that all but two of them had been born in the United States or had been brought here while very young, and knew little of their native land. The other two were real geisha girls who married wealthy countrymen and moved to Los Angeles’. This Paramount press release is entitled ‘East Meets West and Learns Forgotten Customs of Native Orient from Movie Mentors’, and it claims that the Japanese girls ‘were found to have so completely succumbed to Western influence that they had to be taught the customs of their own country’. Hollywood has repeatedly proved determined to teach the other exactly how to look and sound exotic for its cinematic representations of Japan.

The 1932 *Madame Butterfly* introduces several new scenes of local colour not found in previous versions of the narrative. During the early stages of the production, a cameraman was sent to Japan to shoot ‘atmospheric’ footage. Some of this on-location footage was employed in double-exposed shots – as just before Butterfly and her family are shown praying at a temple – thereby placing the film’s actors ‘in Japan’ without actually sending them there.<sup>43</sup> Later we witness (what is framed as) the traditional Japanese wedding ceremony of Pinkerton and Butterfly, presented in far more detail than in the opera. The most extended scene of exotic realism, and one that well illustrates the care the film-makers took to shape this reality, occurs at Goro’s teahouse. This cinematic teahouse is constructed through image and sound as a site of erotic suggestion. We hear off-screen female laughter, glimpse the faces of Japanese women in mirrors and through lattice windows, and are led to hidden rooms behind multiple sliding doors. The scene begins with a woman lighting a lantern outside. This shot then dissolves as the image of Butterfly’s face fades into her handheld mirror which perfectly replaces the illuminated lantern on the screen. Harling’s melody at this reflective moment is somewhat symmetrical itself around the pitch B flat, which roughly splits the tune’s octave ambitus. The arrival of Pinkerton and Barton sets in motion a veritable ballet of scurrying geisha, with multiple vortices in multiple planes. (The brief five-shot entrance sequence is demarcated by the length of the music, which consists primarily of a nervous ostinato figure in the low strings and a clapping woodblock.) This intricate on-screen movement, along with the multiple layers of sliding doors, suggests that the geisha house is a mysterious, enticing labyrinth that these two American males are penetrating. The camera pans to the right in the first shot to reveal a line of geisha who then rise and in two groups patter off screen in opposite directions. In the second shot, we see Pinkerton and Barton enter from the left with a geisha who continues towards the back as two geishas advance from the right to greet them, followed by two other geishas who head off towards the back. In the fourth shot, Pinkerton and Barton abruptly redirect their path towards an off-screen room on the right. This redirection of their movement coincides with a bit of syncopated jazzy material on the soundtrack, a striking stylistic shift that suggests something alluring lies just behind the next sliding *sboji*.

<sup>43</sup> See the Paramount Press Sheets for this film on this ‘atmospheric’ footage.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Oboe, Xylophone, and Strings. The Oboe part is in the top staff, featuring a melodic line with a long slur and a dynamic marking of *f*. The Xylophone part is in the middle staff, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a dynamic marking of *f*. The Strings part is in the bottom staff, divided into two systems (treble and bass clefs), playing a pattern of chords with a dynamic marking of *f*. The score includes performance instructions such as *pizz.* (pizzicato) and *arco* (arco) for the strings.

Ex. 1: W. Franke Harling, *Madame Butterfly* (Paramount, 1932), arrival in Japan.

Harling’s manuscript short score discloses some effort on his part to approximate Japanese traditional music and to participate in the film’s professed representational goals.<sup>44</sup> However, this objective was somewhat compromised in the recording of the final soundtrack. This is apparent from early on in the film. Harling composed the music in Example 1 for the dock scene as the sailors arrive in Japan. The use of pizzicato strings moving in parallel fifths, fourths and octaves and the rapid xylophone figuration hardly represent innovations in musical *japonisme*. However, a note written at the top of this score indicates that Harling planned to enhance his musical exoticism: ‘Add native percussion effects’. In the final soundtrack this music is barely audible beneath the dialogue. Following their choreographed entrance sequence discussed above, Goro welcomes the Americans to his teahouse and the following exchange ensues:

Goro	What do your excellencies desire?
Pinkerton	Music.
Barton	And girls.
Pinkerton	And, uh, dancing.
Barton	And girls.
Pinkerton	And, uh, um, girls.
Goro	How many?
Pinkerton	Well, one’s enough for me.

Harling responded to Pinkerton’s demands for exotic music and dance with his own simulated Japanese music (see Ex. 2a). This tune employs the Japanese *in* scale – a pentatonic scale featuring two semitones. In addition, Harling called for a ‘Japanese bamboo flute’ and harp, mandolin and a pizzicato violin for this melody, thus roughly approximating the timbres of the Japanese *sankyoku* ensemble. The following note appears above this music: ‘Under the ensuing dialogue, native music steals into the scene as though blown by a soft breeze from the tea-room adjacent to the garden’. Harling also gave the indication ‘ad lib = no specific tempo or time signature’. This represents his boldest gesture towards approximating Japanese traditional music which, in several of its most refined forms, projects an ambiguity

<sup>44</sup> Harling’s score is held in the Music Department at Paramount Studios.

(a) Bamboo Flute,  
Harp,  
Mandolin with damper,  
1 Violin (pizz.)

(b)

Japanese  
Bamboo  
Flute

Harp &  
Cymbalon

Harp alone

Bamboo  
Flute

Samisen

Cymbalon

Harp

Ex. 2: W. Franke Harling, *Madame Butterfly* (Paramount, 1932), geisha teahouse music.

in pulse and metre. However, bar lines were added in pencil on the score at some point and the poetic cue was crossed out. As the music begins, the American men are led deeper into the teahouse and we catch glimpses of geishas playing *shamisen*, although we do not hear their music. We also briefly view three dancing geishas and do hear their footstomps. These moments of dance and the general close co-ordination between on-screen movement and the music suggest to the viewer that Harling's musical *japonisme* is diegetic and authentic. As the American men settle into their private room and their hired geishas arrive to entertain them, Harling develops his tune by adding a countermelody in the harp and cymbalon and by calling for a *shamisen* in his score (see Ex. 2b).

While being entertained by his geisha, Pinkerton idly picks up her *shamisen* and admires it. However, his attention is quickly diverted by a striking image and he puts

the *shamisen* aside. Butterfly is amusing herself in another room by flitting around in her new kimono, like a butterfly. The soundtrack abruptly switches from Harling's musical *japonisme* to a graceful waltz to accompany her flowing dance, which casts a shadow through several sets of sliding paper walls.<sup>45</sup> Although he had glanced only briefly at the pseudo-Japanese dancing of the geishas during his entrance into the teahouse, Pinkerton is now transfixed by this shadow dance projected on the *shoji* screen and immediately deserts his geisha and her *shamisen*. With a strong sense of entitlement, he opens several doors and barges into Butterfly's room. Startled by this sudden appearance of a tall American in uniform, Butterfly flutters around and then flies out into the garden, accompanied by a staccato woodwind cascade and pursued by the enchanted Pinkerton. Just as Pinkerton is aroused by the very dance style that looks least Japanese, we are intended to recognise Butterfly's singular beauty in part through the shift to a more obviously Euro-American musical style.<sup>46</sup>

The possibilities for enhancing musical exoticism in the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* were not fully realised. Why did this film not employ actual Japanese music for the scene set in the teahouse? Why was the *shamisen* put aside? In another Orientalist feature from 1932, Frank Capra's *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*, Harling (or the film's producers) chose to include the performance of Chinese *sixhu* music in addition to Harling's own musical *chinoiserie*. Perhaps the use of Japanese music in *Madame Butterfly* was avoided because it would have virtually excluded any creative work by Harling, since he was already obliged to use so much of Puccini's score. As it turned out, even some of Harling's intended *japonisme* effects were left out in the recording of the soundtrack. Similarly, production notes reveal that the film-makers considered casting the Japanese actress Toshia Mori in the role of Butterfly. (Mori had just played the role of the Chinese servant girl in *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*.) However, the film-makers eventually rejected this possibility for achieving 'authentic' exoticism. In the end, Sylvia Sydney played the role in yellow face (see Fig. 2).

<sup>45</sup> This dance does not to my eye resemble the typical movement style of Ito. Rather, it is more reminiscent of the butterfly dance of Loie Fuller. The earlier fake geisha dancing does not look much like Ito's modernist choreography either.

<sup>46</sup> Music's role in distinguishing one 'Asian' face from another on screen, or in transforming our perception of a specific exotic character, is pointedly illustrated by one astonishing three-and-a-half minute sequence in the 1932 Frank Capra film *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*. In this film, a Chinese warlord has kidnapped a white American woman who clearly is both repulsed by and attracted to this exotic man. In a bizarre dream sequence without dialogue, General Yen (Nils Asther) appears in her bedroom as a grotesque Nosferatu-like figure intent on rape and accompanied by Harling's strong pentatonic tune. The white woman is horrified. A second, masked man in western clothes enters the room to rescue her and then removes his mask, revealing the normal face of General Yen (Asther again, but in less grotesque yellowface). Harling provides lush amorous music at this moment, the woman is thrilled by his visage, and the two engage in a passionate kiss. Harling's music helps to erase any negative connotations of this Asiatic face and forces us to accept, rather than be shocked by, this (fake) interracial kiss. As she awakens from the dream she discovers a feminised General Yen standing next to her bed, wearing a Chinese costume and holding a fan. Her ambivalence returns.



Fig. 2: Sylvia Sydney and Cary Grant as Butterfly and Pinkerton. Paramount publicity still for *Madame Butterfly* (1932) (courtesy of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences).

### **‘An unpleasant hangover on the picture’: Avoiding miscegenation**

The American characters in the *Madame Butterfly* narrative have undergone an extensive rehabilitation ever since Long. In Long’s original story there is no indication that Pinkerton entertains any serious feelings for Butterfly and he disappears from the tale without displaying any remorse. His wife is all business and refers to Butterfly as a ‘pretty plaything’. Pinkerton is considerably improved by the final version of Puccini’s opera. Not only is he given an aria to display his caring, sentimental side towards the end, but he is also allowed the last heartfelt cry. The writers and director of the 1932 film attempted to make the American couple look as compassionate and guiltless as possible. Pinkerton is presented as Butterfly’s saviour. Barton and Goro both explain to him, within earshot of Butterfly, that a Japanese marriage is a casual, non-binding act and Butterfly repeatedly thanks him for his charity. Instead of boasting of amorous conquests in multiple exotic ports,

Pinkerton sings a song of praise to the exotic woman. Finally, in the 1932 film Pinkerton remains unaware of their child's existence.

The ending of the 1932 film is unique: Butterfly instructs Suzuki to take the boy to his grandfather and then commits suicide. This ending was determined not solely for dramatic reasons, but also for racist ones. Race was at issue from the early stages of the film's production. Telegrams from July 1932 reveal that the 'miscegenation angle' in the *Madame Butterfly* narrative was considered by the censors responsible for upholding the industry's code. Colonel Jason S. Joy of the Association of Motion Picture Producers wrote on 22 July 1932 that Paramount would not have trouble securing permission to film the story since 'the interpretation of miscegenation under the code has always been guided by the second dictionary definition which specifies whites and negroes only'. In a long memo dated 5 October 1932 Ben Schulberg, the film's producer, explained that the script had been revised in order to make Pinkerton a more likeable character than in the opera and the play. He also discussed the new ending, arguing that since the Pinkertons are presented as a nice couple in the film, it would not be fair to have the mixed-race child 'hang over their lives as a constant reminder of the tragedy'. Schulberg refers to the evolving American perception of the Japanese:

At the time that BUTTERFLY was first presented as a play or an opera, there was no strong, anti-racial feeling toward the Japanese; there were not as yet even immigration laws against their wholesale entry into any country; there were in evidence no consequences of inter-racial marriages between Japanese and white people so that the tragedy of the half blood Japanese-Caucasian was not discernable or thought of. It seems to us to be an unpleasant hangover on the picture after its completion to feel that the half Japanese half American child of Butterfly's and Pinkerton's will have to go through a miserable life in America as a social misfit.<sup>47</sup>

With such concerns in mind, the film-makers were determined to avoid the most telling signs of miscegenation on the screen. Although Butterfly's child is described as having curly blonde hair and purple eyes in several of the earlier versions of the tale, Trouble is played by a dark-haired Japanese-American boy in this 1932 film.

This film takes for granted the notion that Pinkerton's only real wife is the white woman and that Butterfly is tragically naive to imagine otherwise. Adelaide (Kate in other versions) is far more present in the 1932 film than in the short story, play, opera or 1915 silent film. Her status as Mrs Pinkerton is affirmed by a brief shot of the couple exiting a white clapboard church following their wedding, complete with the requisite Mendelssohn march heard on the soundtrack. Adelaide proves immediately forgiving upon learning of Pinkerton's affair with Butterfly and never betrays the slightest apprehension about her Japanese rival. She reassures Pinkerton: 'Don't feel so badly about it dear, it isn't your fault'. Just as the film assumes that raising a mixed-race child in the US would be an inordinate punishment for Pinkerton's simple exotic fling, Adelaide's equanimity suggests that it would be absurd to fear that an American male would ever ultimately choose a Japanese

<sup>47</sup> Clearly, the idea that a person of Asian heritage could be considered an 'American' is precluded here and the 'miscegenation angle' is of chief concern.

woman over the blond-haired girl back home. White women formed the film's intended audience. A pre-production report on the script stated that the film would likely 'appeal greatly to women and to men who are sentimentally inclined'. While reaffirming the paramount precedence of white heterosexual marriage, the film lingers lovingly over scenes of Butterfly's and Pinkerton's domesticity. We hear Puccini's joyful 'flower duet' music as we observe Butterfly's ideal feminine behaviour – removing her husband's shoes, mixing his drink, preparing his pipe. The intended moral of the *Madame Butterfly* story has never been concerned with the behaviour of American men overseas. Rather, the real cultural work of this perennial narrative has been to provide an exotic fantasy for the American male and a model of feminine subservience for the American woman.<sup>48</sup>

### Filming the filming of the film-opera: Framing Puccini

Paramount Pictures paid G. Ricordi & Co. \$13,500 for permission to use Puccini's music in the 1932 *Madame Butterfly*. In 1962 Paramount paid \$52,400 for permission to employ portions of Puccini's opera, sung in Japanese and Italian, in the soundtrack of *My Geisha*.<sup>49</sup> In this film, an American movie star (Lucy, played by Shirley MacLaine) decides to follow her French film director husband (Paul, played by Yves Montand) in secret to Japan and then disguises herself as 'Yoko' in order to counter her imagined exotic rivals. Pretending to be a Japanese geisha, she fools her husband – who is filming an 'authentic Japanese' version of Puccini's opera – and is cast in the part of Butterfly herself.<sup>50</sup> Paul had planned to prove himself with

<sup>48</sup> This argument is powerfully made by Gina Marchetti in *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993). Marchetti discusses *My Geisha* in relationship to this paradigm in chapter 9 of her book. (My reading of *My Geisha*'s racial and gender politics presented below is in close agreement with Marchetti's.) Mari Yoshihara has more recently concurred that *Madame Butterfly* is a story 'written and continually adapted by white men and widely enjoyed by white female audiences in America'. However, Yoshihara argues that the cultural cross-dressing by white American women involved in performing this specific tale or participating in Orientalism in general, provided an 'effective tool for white women's empowerment and pleasure as New Women'. See Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York, 2003), 5, 78. I confess to being unable to see how playacting as a subservient childlike geisha on stage helped in the campaign for establishing a new conception of womanhood and female agency in America, either from the performer's or the audience's perspective. (Presumably Yoshihara's argument would need to pertain equally to those European women who performed in nineteenth-century French Orientalist operas.) Of course, as Yoshihara notes, the indulgence in Orientalism by elite white American women did place those women in a certain powerful position *vis-à-vis* exotic Others, both within the United States and in East Asia.

<sup>49</sup> This information is found in the Franz Waxman Collection at the Syracuse University Library, Special Collections.

<sup>50</sup> In 1955 a film similar to Paul's fictional film-opera was produced by an Italian company and directed by Carmine Gallone with Japanese actors but with Italian opera singers singing in Italian and filmed in Italy with some settings imported from Japan. See Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (Princeton, 1982), 247. A 7 September 1956 review of the film in the *Beverly Hills Citizen* ('Exquisite "Butterfly"' by Hazel Flynn) opined that the 'tale is particularly timely today when, due to the Occupation, there are so many "Americans with Japanese faces"'.

this film and had refused to allow Lucy to be cast in the role. By the film's end, Lucy learns from a 'true geisha' to sacrifice her own ambitions for those of her husband. While parodying both previous cinematic presentations of the opera and Hollywood's attempts at presenting 'the real Japan', *My Geisha* nevertheless participates in the quest for exotic authenticity and benefits from Puccini's music. Japanese instruments appear in Franz Waxman's score and the film offers stunning shots of Japan in 'vivid, arresting colours'. *My Geisha* purports to criticise and distance itself from the Madame Butterfly narrative tradition, but actually furthers its Orientalist ideology.

The relationship between the film and the opera becomes quite complex and layered in *My Geisha* and the boundary between diegetic and non-diegetic music is often thoroughly blurred. In certain sequences we see and hear Puccini's opera as though through the 'diegetic camera', while in others we witness the creation of the film-within-the-film from a non-diegetic position as we hear either Puccini's or Waxman's music. Puccini's music is heard as we observe the rehearsing and filming of the film-opera, as we see the diegetic screening of the film-opera, and to indicate to us that the diegetic screening of the film-opera is occurring off screen. In one instance, we witness the rehearsing and filming of the wedding scene in the film-opera as we hear Waxman's own Orientalist music. In this sequence, we are likely to assume, at first, that Waxman's music is non-diegetic – particularly if we are familiar with the opera. This scene resembles silent film in that we see the moving lips of the performers but hear only Waxman's music. However, when we hear and see Paul cut the filming of this scene, the music immediately ends as though it had been the soundtrack to the film-opera and was thus diegetic all along.

Puccini's music is first heard in *My Geisha* during a thirteen-shot montage sequence of the production of the film-opera. Immediately before the sequence begins, Paul is seen reading a love letter from Lucy – a letter he believes she has sent to him from home. His assistant yells 'quiet on the set', but Paul is engrossed in the letter and replies 'no you can talk, go ahead'. However, Puccini's music enters non-diegetically and does silence the diegetic sound world of the 'set'. Again, although we occasionally see moving lips, we hear only the opera, as though we are experiencing a silent film with a phonograph playing Puccini's music in the dark. In this sequence we hear the love duet from Butterfly's 'dolce notte' through to the end of Act I. Although most of the shots in the montage present mundane moments of film-making, in which Paul frequently mimes directorial frustration and tantrums, Puccini's music makes clear that the sequence is concerned with the love of this working Hollywood couple, or at least with her love for him. The lyrical camera movement and the six gentle dissolves between shots also suggest this interpretation.

Throughout this extended sequence, we assume that we are hearing non-diegetic music and are seeing through a non-diegetic camera whenever the movement within the frame appears unconnected to our music and camera. The extended third shot in the sequence offers a graceful pan of Paul rehearsing a Bugaku dancer – both the dancer and the camera appear to move to Puccini's gliding melody, although the camera angle suggests that we are non-diegetic voyeurs. Some moments in this

sequence more pointedly call into question the non-diegetic status of Puccini's music and of the camera through which we are viewing the filming of the film-opera. In one shot Lucy (in disguise as Yoko in the costume of Butterfly, of course) gracefully pivots and strikes a pose in preparation for the next take in perfect synchronisation with Puccini's musical climax and cymbal crash and directly facing the diegetic(?) camera. The camera angle and her apparently choreographed movement momentarily suggest a diegetic status for Puccini. The sequence ends with a gorgeous long shot of Lucy/Yoko/Butterfly – it is unclear which persona MacLaine is portraying at this point – walking along the beach, seemingly in pace with the music, as the sun sets and Puccini's Act I music reaches its cadence.

Puccini's music achieves a more secure diegetic status in *My Geisha* during Paul's filming of Butterfly's death scene. By this point in the film Paul has discovered that Yoko is actually his wife Lucy.<sup>51</sup> He is humiliated by this realisation and has determined that Lucy loves her career more than him and that their marriage will end with this film. Without revealing his knowledge, and in order to prepare Lucy for her performance in Butterfly's tragic scene, he propositions Yoko/Lucy in her hotel room the night before the final shooting. When she repulses him, he suggests that he will easily find satisfaction elsewhere. Lucy is crushed, believing that Paul's behaviour proves that he has routinely had affairs with geishas the world over – that he is simply another Pinkerton.

The next sequence presents the filming of the final scene in the film-opera. We hear Puccini's music from reh. 55 to the end. The music starts exactly with Paul's hand signal and the camera movement is far more lyrical during this diegetic sequence. We hear Butterfly's vocal lines sung in Japanese and the camera pans over the landscape, reaching MacLaine/Lucy/Yoko's face as she lip-syncs the word 'sayonara'. (MacLaine's acting is powerful and her lip-syncing adept, indicating that she could indeed have starred in a stunning film-opera version of *Madama Butterfly*.) Immediately after Butterfly dies, and before the music has ended, we hear Pinkerton's threefold cry 'Butterfly' and the camera pans to Paul as he cuts the filming.<sup>52</sup> Suddenly, our confidence in the diegesis has been shaken: a diegetic camera would not have panned to film the director, the diegetic opera music would not have continued after the filming had ended.<sup>53</sup> We hear the final eleven bars of Puccini's opera as we follow Paul's abrupt departure from the set and see him drive off alone as the film's producer, Sam, and members of the crew stare at him in

<sup>51</sup> Paul's discovery is made, ironically, through cinematic technology itself. While watching a colour negative of one day's footage, Paul recognises his blue-eyed, red-haired wife beneath her false wig and coloured contact lenses. Following a moment of stunned silence, Waxman scored this crucial section with a tragic solo cello line, musically depicting Paul's devastation as he views the revealing sequence again and as we stare at the reflection of the diegetic film as it flickers across his face in the dark.

<sup>52</sup> The male Euro-operatic accent of the tenor might spur the audience to make an association with Montand's French accent, and thus with Paul, even before the camera pans to him. Knowledge of Montand's own musical career may also have shaped early 1960s reception of his performance in this film.

<sup>53</sup> Of course, a true filming of this scene in the film-opera would never have been achieved in one long take anyway. We are actually viewing something that more closely resembles a screening of a film-opera.

Ex. 3: Franz Waxman, *My Geisha* (Paramount 1962), arrival in Tokyo music.

confusion and dismay. Just as the 1932 film reframed 'Poor Butterfly' to express Pinkerton's pain, here Puccini's music becomes the soundtrack to Paul's tragedy after the diegetic filming has ended. Although we have just witnessed a female character commit suicide on screen, the story of *My Geisha* has become the tragedy of this man.

### The 'True Geisha'?: Framing exotic realism

In the Main Title sequence of *My Geisha* a drawing of a *shamisen* appears behind Franz Waxman's name. Although separated by thirty years, Harling's and Waxman's versions of musical *japonisme* are quite similar. Waxman's 'Arrival in Tokio' music (see Ex. 3) might remind us of Harling's (see Ex. 1).<sup>54</sup> Waxman had stretched his musical resources to include Japanese instruments, timbres and scales more significantly in his score for the 1957 Warner Bros. film *Sayonara*.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps to avoid composing in a style too dissimilar from Puccini's, Waxman's few gestures towards Japanese music are far less bold in the later *My Geisha*.

Like the 1932 *Madame Butterfly*, *My Geisha* includes an important scene set in a teahouse. However, in this film we arrive at the teahouse with the American wife. Breaching Hollywood convention, Lucy enters the exotic/erotic setting normally restricted to male characters in order to gaze voyeuristically upon her husband as he sits surrounded by geishas.<sup>56</sup> As we peek with Lucy's eye through a gap in the *shoji*, we hear vocal music accompanied by *shamisen*. We briefly see one of the geishas playing the *shamisen* but never see the source of the vocal line. The diegetic status of this music is confirmed as we see and hear Paul hum along with the tune and snap his fingers while rocking in syncopation. Thus the film, however briefly, presents Japanese music in a somewhat positive light, although Paul (under the *sake*'s influence, of course) seems to hear it with ears conditioned by jazz and Rock and Roll. This tune is a famous Japanese folk song entitled 'Kyūshū Tankū Bushi' ('The Coal Miner's Song of Kyūshū'). Published sheet music for this song is found among the *My Geisha* score materials at Paramount Studios and a printed note explains that coal miners' tunes have, since World War II, 'become quite popular all

<sup>54</sup> Waxman's score for *My Geisha* is held in the Music Department at Paramount Studios.

<sup>55</sup> I have discussed the music of *Sayonara* in detail in my forthcoming study 'Singing Sayonara: Musical Representations of Japan in 1950s Hollywood Film'; a preliminary report of this research was delivered at the 1998 meeting of the American Musicological Society.

<sup>56</sup> See Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril'*, 192.

over Japan, and are often sung even at banquets'. Continuing a long tradition of composers in quest of 'ethnographic authenticity', the film-makers must have felt authorised in selecting this particular folk song for the diegetic background music at their cinematic geisha feast. The scene continues with music for *shamisen* and banjo composed by Yajuro Kineya and then, as Lucy enters the room in disguise, with a simple *koto* theme by Waxman which employs the Japanese *in* scale. Again, Waxman's musical *japonisme* appears to recapitulate Harling's of three decades prior.

From the very opening of the film, Paul explains that with his film-opera he hopes to 'capture the real traditional Japan' by casting a 'real Japanese girl' in the role of Butterfly. Puccini's opera, ironically, will serve as his vehicle for authenticity. Paul's quest for exotic realism provides some of the comic energy in *My Geisha*. Paul becomes increasingly frustrated during the auditions as none of the Japanese female hopefuls comes close to his ideal image of a Japanese woman. After listening to the Rock and Roll singing of a trio of Japanese girls in modern American dress, Paul complains: 'They're more western than the girls at home. I knew there was an American tendency, but they are making a fetish of it. They're not Japanese anymore. [. . .] That's just why I want to do this picture. I want to capture the old spirit of Japan while it still exists'. Hearing American music emanating from Japanese bodies provokes this outburst.<sup>57</sup> Paul claims that all he wants is to 'use a plain old fashion real Japanese girl who doesn't sing Rock and Roll'. However, what he actually has in mind is the mythic mute Oriental woman and he acknowledges as much when he states that all he needs is the right 'face'. He is looking for a Japanese puppet through which he, the ventriloquist, will project Puccini's vocal music. While the fictional director, Paul, only required a body that looked Japanese, the plot of *My Geisha* demanded that Lucy Dell (and thus Shirley MacLaine) apply extensive and painful cosmetics and manipulate her voice in order to convince us that she could fool both Paul's eyes and ears.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Although presented comically here, Paul's complaint that contemporary Japan had been corrupted by American culture and that the ideal women of Old Japan were vanishing was commonly echoed by off-screen American males in the 1950s and early 60s. In addition, Euro-Americans often reacted negatively and derisively towards Japanese approximations of spoken English and American musical styles throughout the twentieth century. For a more recent example, see Dave Barry's rant on Japanese rock in *Dave Barry Does Japan* (New York, 1992), chapter 6.

<sup>58</sup> On 'racist cosmetology' with reference to *My Geisha*, see Eugene Franklin Wong, *On Visual Media Racism: Asians in the American Motion Pictures* (New York, 1978), 40, 43. As discussed above with reference to *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*, music can play a crucial role in cinematic racial coding. Soon after Lucy decides to take on the disguise of a geisha, we see a transition from a shot of Lucy on a poster to her in geisha costume at the start of the next sequence. A note dated 15 August 1961 attached to the musical sketch for this moment (collected in the *My Geisha* music production boxes at Paramount Studios) reveals that Waxman 'suggested starting with harp cadenza until dissolve from poster to Lucy, made up as geisha again, then on dissolve the harp will be changed to a *koto* playing same music'. In the film, however, a jazzy clarinet lick accompanies Lucy's poster and then is imitated by the *koto* in the next shot. Perhaps Waxman decided that the harp would not contrast enough with the *koto*, or perhaps the jazz-inflected line was intended to suggest that MacLaine's sexual appeal was in no way diminished by her geisha disguise.

The conceit of the film-within-a-film in *My Geisha* suggests that there is a sharp division between reality and fictional depiction on the screen. By framing some sequences and settings as part of the fictional film, this film creates an aura of authenticity for the other settings. As we view the film, we are being taught not only that the fictional Lucy Dell is astonishingly skilful in her imitation of a Japanese woman, but that MacLaine is actually doing a tremendous job of cultural cross-dressing herself. Similarly, the recognisability of Puccini's music and its frequent 'on-set' diegetic status in the film-opera frames it as clearly not Japanese and thus, in contrast, suggests that certain pieces of musical *japonisme* by Waxman are authentic specimens. (This 'figure/ground' dynamic is, of course, at work within Puccini's score itself.) This process of implied authenticity through representational counterpoint is particularly in play as we encounter the 'true geisha' in this film.

In order to carry out her deception, Lucy seeks training from a geisha teacher. The venerable teacher provides Lucy and Sam (the producer), and thus us, with a stern lecture on what constitutes a 'true geisha'. (The film also takes the opportunity at this point to introduce us to the tea ceremony – we see the 'true geisha', framed by open *shoji*, enacting the ritual in a back room.) The geisha teacher lectures at such length that we are compelled to accept the veracity of his words and likely assume, at least momentarily, that the woman he introduces is herself a real geisha. The foolish misconceptions and obvious cultural ignorance of the two American characters further supports the authenticity of the characters presented to us as being 'Japanese'. The low-angle shot of the teacher and Waxman's musical *japonisme* also encourage this perception. As the Americans arrive at the geisha teacher's home, we hear repeated stacked-fifth sonorities in the marimba, flutes and strings, and the plucking of harps and *koto* accented by finger cymbals (see Ex. 4). (We hear bars 1–9 as they arrive and enter into the house. The general pause of bar 9 occurs as they are introduced and enter the room. Bar 10 begins as they seat themselves on the floor and we arrive at bar 17 as the teacher asks whether they are interested in the tea ceremony. In these final eight bars the melody is taken by the viola, viola d'amore, banjo, *shamisen*, *koto*, cello and two harps, while the accompaniment calls for *koto*, two flutes, marimba and harp.) Waxman's music resumes with the start of the teacher's lecture, supporting him as he rises to his feet.

The 'true geisha' is named Kazumi, perhaps a reflexive reference to Katsumi in *Sayonara*.<sup>59</sup> The geisha teacher suggests that Kazumi could serve as Lucy's personal trainer and states that 'it would be an honour to see a geisha truly portrayed on the screen'. However, this 'true geisha' is played by Yoko Tani, an actress born in Paris who was a successful figure in European B-grade movies and sci-fi films from the 1950s to the 1970s. (Her first film appears to have been *Ali-Baba et les quarante voleurs* in 1954.) Of course, the irony is compounded since Lucy assumes the name 'Yoko' in her geisha disguise. While recognising that Yoko Tani was only playing the role of a geisha, the *New York Times* reviewer of *My Geisha* still credits her with adding

<sup>59</sup> The film makes multiple references to earlier 1950s Hollywood films set in Japan. As Paul and Bob (the actor taking the part of Pinkerton in Paul's film) leave the teahouse, the men joke that 'sayonara' is the only Japanese word Americans know. Bob then bids farewell by saying 'Marlon Brando'. (Brando played the leading man in *Sayonara* in 1957.)

The image displays three systems of musical notation for the score of 'My Geisha'. The first system includes Harps (Harp 1 and Harp 2), Violins and Violas (marked *con sordini*), Koto, Celli and 2 Flutes, and Marimba. The second system includes Harps (Hps.), Violins and Violas (Vins., Vlas.), Koto, Celli and 2 Flutes (Celli, 2 Fl.), and Marimba (Mar.). The third system is a piano accompaniment starting at measure 10, featuring a treble and bass clef with various chords and melodic lines.

Ex. 4: Franz Waxman, *My Geisha* (Paramount 1962), the 'true Geisha'.

authenticity to the picture and assumes that this was the goal of the producer: 'Yoko Tani, as a perceptive geisha who teaches our heroine the trade, and Tatsuo Saito are among the native players who add authenticity to the proceedings'.<sup>60</sup> Paramount's

<sup>60</sup> A. H. Weiler, 'My Geisha Arrives', *New York Times*, 14 June 1962, 23.

own press releases for the film encouraged this view of Yoko Tani's role: 'Also adding to the authenticity of Miss MacLaine's portrayal was the advice of lovely Yoko Tani'.<sup>61</sup> Ironically, the Technical Adviser for the 1932 *Madame Butterfly*, Michio Ito, likely knew more about geishas than did this Japanese actress in 1962. MacLaine herself has revealed that she spent two weeks in a geisha training school in Japan 'learning the intricacies of the delicate tea ceremony, the Japanese dance and how to play the stringed instrument'.<sup>62</sup> This claim to special knowledge of Japanese culture resonates oddly with the film's lampooning of Hollywood's quest for exotic authenticity, particularly since the skills listed by MacLaine are not demonstrated by her in *My Geisha*.

In *My Geisha* we see the American actress Shirley MacLaine playing the role of an American actress pretending to be a geisha who plays the role of a geisha in a film (with a French director) of an opera by an Italian based on an American play and short story. We hear the voice of the Japanese soprano Michiko Sunahara singing the part of Butterfly in Japanese as we see MacLaine lip-sync these lines as an American actress lip-syncing as a geisha lip-syncing in the role of Butterfly. Sam refers to the arrival of the opera recordings for the film-opera's soundtrack and to their superior quality, yet we never see the source of Butterfly's voice – the Japanese vocalist and the audio technology remain invisible. This singing voice is heard as either a voice-off or a voice-over depending on the diegetic status of Puccini's music in any given moment in the film. The jacket notes for the 1962 RCA soundtrack recording of *My Geisha* state that Sunahara 'instructed Miss MacLaine on the elocution of the lyrics while the film was being shot in Japan'.<sup>63</sup> Of course Sunahara did not coach MacLaine in speaking or singing Butterfly's lines in Japanese. Rather, she taught MacLaine how to mouth the words sung by this Japanese soprano convincingly (see Fig. 3).<sup>64</sup> A parallel, although fictional, form of cross-cultural ventriloquism occurs in the climactic scene as Kazumi teaches Lucy the proper lines of an obedient wife.

### **'No one before you, my husband, not even I': Framing the American woman**

Seemingly the most light-hearted treatment of the Madame Butterfly narrative, *My Geisha* may actually be the most sinister. The very title of this film implies male

<sup>61</sup> See the *My Geisha* Paramount Press Book at AMPAS.

<sup>62</sup> See the *My Geisha* page at [www.shirleymaclaine.com/movies/biomoviesmygeisha.html](http://www.shirleymaclaine.com/movies/biomoviesmygeisha.html) (accessed 5 August 2004).

<sup>63</sup> *My Geisha*, RCA Victor, LOC-1070, 1962.

<sup>64</sup> MacLaine does imitate the inflections of Japanese speech, at least as Japanese is heard by Anglo ears, in one particularly comic scene in the film. While attending a sumo match with Paul, Lucy (disguised as Yoko) is approached by a wrestler who attempts to strike up a conversation in Japanese. Lucy, unable to speak the language, strings together random phrases and words in an impressively rapid and fluent 'Japanese voice'. The wrestler, having just recently been thrown to the mat, taps his head as though to jolt his auditory system back in operation, and walks away bewildered. Spoken Japanese has frequently been presented as gibberish in Hollywood films. In the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* the baby boy's babble is denounced by Butterfly for sounding too Japanese. She requests that he speak only in his father's English.



Fig. 3: Shirley MacLaine lip-synching ‘Un bel dì’ in Japanese. Paramount publicity still for *My Geisha* (1962).

dominance and female submission, and in the film’s final scene we witness a double fictional suicide by a woman on screen. The opening night of the film-opera takes place in a kabuki theatre in Tokyo. The diegetic screening of the film is indicated, at first, only indirectly. A diegetic gong signals that the film-opera will begin and we see the audience settle down and direct their attention to the off-screen screen. We hear Puccini’s overture as the film-opera begins but do not see the diegetic screen. Instead, our camera cuts between shots of Paul and shots of Lucy and Sam in the theatre. The cutting rhythm is precisely synchronised with Puccini’s fugal entries and thus oddly suggests that these images constitute the diegetic film-opera. After Lucy and Sam move backstage, Puccini’s music is heard at a lower volume and any confusion regarding diegetic status is at least momentarily clarified. Following this brief backstage scene, the screen dissolves back to an image of the audience and thus suggests the passing of time. We see the diegetic screening of Butterfly’s ‘Un bel dì’ aria and see and hear the audience applaud at the end of the number as though they were attending a live performance. Another dissolve serves to indicate a further passage of time and to return us to Lucy’s dressing room for the climactic moment in *My Geisha*.

Lucy is changing into her disguise as Yoko with the assistance of Kazumi. Her plan is to surprise her husband and the entire audience by removing her wig during her curtain call and revealing that Lucy Dell, rather than an authentic Japanese geisha, has just been seen in the role of Butterfly. Sam remarks that this stunt and

the moment of *stupore universale* it will inspire will surely earn her an Oscar. After Sam leaves, Kazumi offers Lucy a gift of an inscribed fan. Lucy thanks Kazumi and requests a translation of the fan's text. Kazumi then deliberately reads the inscription twice: 'No one before you, my husband, not even I'. Lucy is clearly not thrilled by Kazumi's none-too-subtle hint, but the inscription has struck a chord.<sup>65</sup> Throughout this sequence we hear Butterfly's final death-scene aria from our backstage position. Lucy continues to dress as Yoko and applies one of her dark-coloured contact lenses. At the moment when we, and Lucy, hear Pinkerton's cries of 'Butterfly', Lucy employs the fan to contemplate her natural blue eye and then assumed brown eye in the mirror.<sup>66</sup> We abruptly cut to the diegetic screen and witness Butterfly's suicide (see Fig. 4). This sequence involves an odd temporal disjunction, or at least a stuttered replay, since we have already heard from backstage the music that accompanies this moment in the opera and are now hearing Puccini's final bars. Perhaps this deliberate visual discontinuity was intended to suggest the symbolic suicide which occurs off screen at this moment in *My Geisha*.

As the audience applauds madly, Paul takes the stage. Aware of Lucy's and Sam's planned surprise, Paul introduces Yoko and calls her to take a bow. Lucy surprises him and the audience by entering as herself, dressed in western clothes. She explains to the audience that Yoko has entered a convent and will be seen in public no more. By killing off her fake geisha persona and thereby foregoing the chance to win an Oscar by claiming the credit due to her, Lucy 'internalizes the "lesson" she learned from being a Japanese woman', the lesson of the 'true geisha', and of this film.<sup>67</sup> As though having heard Paul's pained voice in Pinkerton's sung cries, Lucy has decided to renounce her own ambition. Only by removing the kimono, the exotic disguise that allowed her to assume the role denied to her by her husband, has Lucy assumed her 'proper' role as Paul's wife. In a sense, Lucy 'speaks' the lines of the 'true geisha' by appearing on stage in western dress. *My Geisha* arrives at a conclusion common to Hollywood films of the late 1950s and early 60s (and to the 1932 *Madame Butterfly*): Japanese women represent an ideal that American women can and should emulate.<sup>68</sup> In comparison with other *Madame Butterfly* settings, *My Geisha* is a much

<sup>65</sup> Perhaps at this moment Lucy recalls a remark made to her by Paul when he still believed she was Yoko: 'The Western woman is no match for the Japanese woman'. In her Yoko disguise, Lucy had heard Paul explain that he badly wanted to do this film-opera 'mostly so I could be the man, and she [Lucy] could be the woman' – a statement supported by Waxman with intensely lyrical music. On Paul's masculine crisis and Lucy's 'tomboyish gestures', see Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril'*, 187–8.

<sup>66</sup> A shot with similar implications appears in the 1932 *Madame Butterfly*, when Butterfly discovers a photograph of Adelaide in Pinkerton's luggage and holds the photo near to her own face so that we are prompted to compare her Asiatic features with the face of the white woman back home. A similar sequence occurred in the 1922 *Toll of the Sea* as the Pinkerton character's friends persuade him that he must drop his Chinese wife. The men gesture first to a white American woman and then to a Chinese woman with bad teeth. The camera focuses on each woman in turn, forcing the audience to make the comparison also and (most likely) to draw the same conclusion.

<sup>67</sup> See Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril'*, 198–9.

<sup>68</sup> Up to a certain point, of course. The suicide device in these Orientalist tales allows for a final alienation from the exotic woman, and thereby clears the way not only for the white



Fig. 4: Shirley MacLaine's Japanese suicide. Paramount publicity still for *My Geisha* (1962) (courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive).

more direct presentation of the lesson to be learned from this well-worn narrative. With a bit of training, even an American wife can succeed as a 'true geisha'. The comedy ends with a clear *lieto fine*: Paul gets to have his blue-eyed wife and his geisha too.<sup>69</sup>

### 'Not just an opera, but real!'

Locating a clear vantage point from which to construct a critique of *My Geisha* is quite difficult. To what extent is the representation of Japanese culture in this film

*footnote continued from previous page*

female character to reassume her rightful place, but metaphorically for the white female audience member to fill the void left by the exotic woman's death. On the roots of this narrative device in nineteenth-century Orientalist opera, see James Parakilas, 'The Soldier and the Exotic: Operatic Variations on a Theme of Racial Encounter, I and II', *The Opera Quarterly*, 10/2-3 (Winter 1993-4/Spring 1994), 33-56, 43-69.

<sup>69</sup> By extension, some white male audience members may also discover a certain satisfaction in the film's conclusion. As Marchetti puts it, 'for male viewers, these stories promote a fantasy in which a desire for the exoticism of a nonwhite beauty can be rationalized by the fact that the beauty is really Caucasian'; Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril'*, 177.

a progressive parody of previous Hollywood Orientalist products? To what extent can *My Geisha* be separated from the heritage of the Madame Butterfly tradition and from its own comic plot? Gina Marchetti has argued that *My Geisha*'s 'own self-consciousness tends to solidify its conservatism'.<sup>70</sup> Looking beyond the superficial layer of parody, my detailed analysis has uncovered strains and strategies of Orientalist representation endemic to this film. Although the film pokes fun at Paul's quest for a 'real Japanese girl' and the 'old spirit of Japan' with arch sophistication, traces of Paul's fictional desires and of his appropriations of Puccini are evident throughout this Paramount production. The quest for exotic realism clearly inspired the film's cinematography, and the film repeatedly assumes an unearned authoritative tone as it introduces us to the tea ceremony, sumo wrestling and the art of the geisha. However, my critique of the film's agenda along gender lines is complicated by consideration of its parodistic elements. Although the fictional director, Paul, receives the public's adulation as Lucy sacrifices her success, Shirley MacLaine did receive top billing in *My Geisha*. The fact that the film's producer, Steve Parker, was MacLaine's husband at the time further confuses matters. Was *My Geisha* a vehicle for Parker or for MacLaine? Were the gender implications of the plot part of an elaborate joke shared by Parker and MacLaine? Or was Parker calling out to his wife through the film? Rather than delving further into Hollywood biographies and *My Geisha*'s self-reflections, we should pull back in this conclusion to consider the reflexive potential of film and opera more broadly.<sup>71</sup>

Film can never escape the non-diegetic camera. As Christopher Ames has stated, 'films about Hollywood purport to take the viewer behind the scenes and behind the cameras, but by definition what appears on the screen must be taking place in front of the camera'.<sup>72</sup> Opera, however, can more easily and more transparently construct and expose multiple proscenium arches and its own theatrical mechanisms. Opera can stage itself as an opera-within-an-opera relatively easily, where film can only pretend to accomplish this because it can never present itself from a distance. Similarly, opera can literally incorporate film on the stage, whereas a film-opera never quite replicates the live performance experience of opera, no matter how enthusiastically the audience (either actual or on screen) may applaud. Both of the films considered here contain film-opera sections, although this merging of genres is achieved in very different ways. In the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* the film itself appears to become a film-opera in certain sequences. *My Geisha* includes actual film-opera footage, but attempts to present this material diegetically as a film-within-the-film. Considering cinematic reflexivity further, *My Geisha* appears to aim for exotic realism by emphasising the self-referential. However, reflexivity ultimately

<sup>70</sup> Marchetti, 183.

<sup>71</sup> Perhaps a brief plunge into Hollywood biography is in order here since MacLaine has referred to the film as being 'almost autobiographical' ([www.shirleymaclaine.com/movies](http://www.shirleymaclaine.com/movies)). Steve Parker was raised in Japan and he and MacLaine were married in 1954. Jealous of her success, Parker moved back to Japan and the couple maintained an 'open marriage' for the next thirty years. Their joint interest in things Japanese is reflected in their daughter's middle name, Sachiko.

<sup>72</sup> Christopher Ames, *Movies About the Movies: Hollywood Reflected* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1997), 4.

proves corrosive for realism, as does rampant intertextuality. *Madame Butterfly* undermines its attempts to present authentic images and sounds of Japan simply by referencing the Madame Butterfly narrative itself. By 1932 the tale had been told too many times to hold claim to an audience's suspension of disbelief. *My Geisha* overtly reflects on the Butterfly tradition, whereas the 1932 film cannot avoid covertly commenting on it.

In *My Geisha* Paul states that with his film-opera of *Madama Butterfly* he seeks to create a work that will be 'not just an opera, but real!' What exactly does Paul assume to be unreal about opera *vis-à-vis* film, and what could possibly satisfy his desires for and standards of authentic exotic representation? Paul is a victim of the delusions of cinematic realism. The notion that film could bring a new standard of realism to opera has been expressed since the earliest days of silent cinema and the promise of cinematic realism has always been particularly pronounced in productions involving exoticism. Where opera is faulted for its unrealistic temporal distension, film's penchant for abrupt leaps in both time and place are even further removed from lived experience.<sup>73</sup> Opera's alleged shortcomings in visual representation find certain compensations. In Orientalist opera, music sustains the exotic impact of the otherwise static set and can direct our attention as would camera angle and movement in film: we are repeatedly taught to see through our ears.<sup>74</sup> Film might seem particularly well suited to presenting the 'authentic' exotic through both sound and image. Film shot on location can 'take us there' in a way not possible on the operatic stage. However, rather than collapsing the distance between the audience and the exotic setting, film can seem to emphasise it. A travelogue presents images and sounds of distant lands on our local movie screen, it does not literally bring the exotic Other to us nor does it transport us there. Instead, we experience the exotic at a definite remove. As a form of live performance, opera has a (much celebrated) presence and a literal realism not found in the movie theatre. By repeatedly representing opera as somehow deficient in terms of realism, film has simultaneously staked out its claim to the real and has condescendingly offered opera its services. Rather than make further claims here for realism in the operatic experience, I will simply assert that film's strategies for exotic representation come no closer to reality in any sense of that word.

Orientalist film is often indebted to Orientalist opera, even when not directly linked by a shared narrative. It is not immediately obvious why this should be the case. Sound film would appear to have a tremendous advantage over opera for representing the acoustic exotic. Consider the *shamisen*. To include genuine Japanese *shamisen* music in either silent film or opera, one would either have to hire a

<sup>73</sup> Grover-Friedlander suggests more generally that 'sound, music, voice and speech in film do not create greater realism. [...] Rather, they accentuate the medium's uneasiness and anxiety'; 'The Phantom of the Opera', 183. For a rather special example of music's potential for disrupting linear time in cinema, see Stan Link, 'Nor the Eye Filled with Seeing: The Sound of Vision in Film', *American Music*, 22 (2004), 84–6.

<sup>74</sup> Link has independently developed a theory of film sound's potential for directing our vision in the cinematic, rather than operatic, experience. See Link, 'Nor the Eye Filled with Seeing'.

performer who would need to be present at every performance in every city, or one would need to make do with a recorded performance.<sup>75</sup> Sound film can easily splice in exotic performances. Throughout the entire history of Hollywood *japonisme*, however, this potential for enhancing musical exotic realism has rarely been realised.<sup>76</sup> In fact, opportunities for including the Other and the Other's music were routinely turned down. Why did the creators of the 1932 *Madame Butterfly* not choose to include footage of actual dancing geishas? Why has Hollywood repeatedly turned to composers such as Harling and Waxman – or to Puccini – for 'Japanese music'? Perhaps these film-makers feared that the presence of the 'real' would prove too disruptive. Perhaps they intuited that actual Japanese traditional music and Japanese actors would undermine the representational style of exotic realism. In studying Hollywood Orientalism, it soon becomes apparent that the legendary 'authentic' exotic is not really wanted even if it can be had, despite the vociferous protestations by film-makers to the contrary. This is particularly true of music.

In Long's 1898 short story *Butterfly* envisions herself as a singing beggar: 'Me with my samisen, standing up bifore all the people, singing funeral songs'. Long's *Butterfly* then acts out this dreaded future by singing a Japanese song and accompanying herself on *shamisen*. In addition, she sings a song that Pinkerton had taught her in a jargon he had made 'as grotesque as possible, the more to amuse him'. The lyrics of this song rival the most sophomoric examples of Tin Pan Alley *japonisme*: 'I call her the belle of Japan—of Japan; / Her name it is O Cho-Cho-San—Cho-Cho-San; / Such tenderness lies in her soft almond eyes, / I tell you she's just ichi ban'. For over a century *Butterfly* has been made to sing 'bifore all the people' and to re-enact her grotesque suicide. She has sung countless exotic songs and endures in American fantasies of race and gender, for this is a tale that has no end.

<sup>75</sup> Mascagni composed for the *shamisen* in his 1898 opera *Iris* as did Furst for Belasco's *The Darling of the Gods*. In neither case did the presence of the Japanese instrument result in Japanese music.

<sup>76</sup> This option was taken, however, in several World War II anti-Japanese propaganda films, including Frank Capra's *Know Your Enemy – Japan* (1945). See my 'An Exotic Enemy: Anti-Japanese Musical Propaganda in World War II Hollywood', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 54 (2001), 336–42.

