

## ***The Magic Flute* trivia:**

1. Who wrote the libretto?

- a. Carl Ludwig Gleseke
- b. Emanuel Schikaneder
- c. Lorenzo da Ponte
- d. Salvatore Cammarano

2. All the characters in *The Magic Flute* have some symbolic significance. The Queen of the Night, in particular, has been the object of much speculation. She's evil, yes, but who or what is she supposed to represent?

- a. Mozart's mother-in-law
- b. Superstition, ignorance and blind faith
- c. Empress Maria Theresa
- d. All of the above

3. Who did Mozart have sing the role of Queen of the Night at the premiere?

- a. His sister-in-law
- b. His lover
- c. His wife
- d. A woman from the theatre troupe

4. In the opera, when Tamino comes to and realizes he's been rescued, who takes the credit for his rescue?

- a. The Three Ladies
- b. Papageno
- c. The Queen of the Night
- d. The First and Second Priests

5. When Tamino and Papageno begin their initiation into the Temple, what must they take a vow of?

- a. Abstinence
- b. Friendship
- c. Silence
- d. Truth

6. Papageno decides that life without a wife is not worth living and that he's never going to get the wife that he's been promised. He wants to commit suicide, however, he decides to give the world one last chance though, and does something almost unknown elsewhere in standard opera. What does he do?

- a. He speaks directly to the audience
- b. He plays the flute onstage unaccompanied
- c. He takes off his clothes
- d. He pours himself a drink

7. The Magic Flute appears to be filled with numerous Masonic references. In particular, the Masonic sacred number is found throughout the opera. What is the number?

- a. Seven
- b. Twenty-One
- c. Three
- d. Two

8. What was the name of the opera that Mozart was writing at the same time that he wrote *The Magic Flute*?

- a. *Lucia Silla*
- b. *La Clemenza di Tito*
- c. *La Traviata*
- d. *Idomeneo*

9. Why did Mozart want to write *The Magic Flute*?

- a. His wife promised a friend of hers that he would compose it for her husband
- b. He was interested in writing a different kind of opera than the Italian comic operas he had written with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte
- c. A wealthy count wanted to have it performed at his court in celebration of his birthday
- d. He knew he could pound it out quickly and he was in need of some cash.

## ANSWERS:

### 1. b. Emanuel Schikaneder

Emanuel Schikaneder was the impresario, actor, singer and playwright who wrote the libretto and was the first performer to sing the role of Papageno. Over the years, the production became a very profitable one for Schikaneder, although he died penniless in 1812 after being stricken with insanity on a trip to Budapest to take up a new post.

### 2. d. All of the above

All of the above, depending in which theory you believe. If the characters were meant to be figures significant to Viennese Freemasons, then Tamino is Emperor Josef, Pamina is Austria, and Queen of the Night is Maria Theresa. With the opera as a celebration of the Enlightenment theory, reason (Sarastro) triumphs over ignorance and superstition (Queen of the Night). The mother-in-law possibility is another unproven theory and it appeared in the film *Amadeus*.

### 3. a. His sister-in-law

His sister-in-law, the German soprano Josepha Hofer, Constanze's older sister, sang this very difficult role. Following her performance as the Queen of the Night at the premiere of *The Magic Flute* in 1791, she continued to perform this famous role on stage, relinquishing it in 1801 at age 43.

### 4. b. Papageno

Papageno, the stock goofy clown of Viennese tradition, joins Tamino on his quest to rescue the princess.

### 5. c. Silence

This vow proves harder for Papageno to keep than Tamino when the Three Ladies appear to tempt the heroes.

### 6. a. He speaks directly to the audience

"Isn't there one pretty girl who wants to stop me from doing this terrible thing? I'll count to three. One...two...two and a half..." The Three Genii step in again and make Papagena appear. All is well.

### 7. c. Three

Three is the Masonic sacred number and it appears frequently: the opera is written in E flat major, which has three flats; there are three ladies who attend to the Queen of the Night and three youth (Genii) who are sent to help Tamino and Pamina; the serpent is cut into three pieces; there are three long chords at the beginning of the overture and three chords that appear again in the temple scene; there are three temples (Wisdom, Reason, Nature) and three trials of ordeal.

### 8. b. *La Clemenza di Tito*

*La Clemenza di Tito* is an Italian opera seria written to celebrate the coronation of Leopold II that had its premiere in Prague on September 6, 1791, just a few weeks before the premiere of *The Magic Flute*. In the first two decades of the 19th century, after *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Clemenza di Tito* was the most-performed Mozart opera.

### 9. b. He was interested in writing a different kind of opera than the Italian comic operas he had written with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte

These had been written for the Imperial Court Theatre or in one case, the Prague National Theatre; *The Magic Flute*, by contrast, was written for the suburban Theater auf der Wieden and would have had a more varied audience, from members of the Court to the working classes. Mozart was also keen to work with Schikaneder, who had been a friend of his for some time.