

# ***Eternal Sunshine #123***

**April 2017**

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On the web at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/>. Also be sure to visit the official Diplomacy World website which can be found at <http://www.diplomacyworld.net>.

Check out my eBay store at <http://stores.ebay.com/dougsrarebooksandmore>

My book "It's Their House; I'm Just a Guest" is available in softcover and Kindle from Amazon at

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1501090968/ref=ox\\_sc\\_act\\_title\\_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKXODER](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1501090968/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKXODER)

Welcome to the latest issue of Eternal Sunshine. One game left and then we're done.

If you want to continue to see my movie reviews and book reviews and such, check out my website After Some Wine ([www.aftersomewine.com](http://www.aftersomewine.com)). You can also follow along on Twitter @aftersomewine. I post carious things on there, but the actual After Some Wine episodes involve me posting unedited video blogs of myself talking about book, music, movies, or personal and family stories after I've had something to drink of the adult variety. I've got two episodes up there so far. Episode 1 is about the music of Lydia Loveless, and Episode 2 has some childhood stories including "The Guitar."

See you in May.

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**XENOGOGIC, April 2017**

**THE CASE FOR OPERATIC POP: WHO WOULD HAVE SUNG IT? Or  
WHAT SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO WHEN DRINKING A CLASSIC MARTINI?**

**By Larry Peery**

"She points out proudly that even though people can say she could not sing, no one can say she did not sing. Peacefully, she dies." --- Florence Foster Jenkins

## **INTRODUCTION**

This article is for people who:

Like opera and pop music.

Like opera but don't like pop music

Like pop music but don't like opera.

Don't like opera and pop music.

Don't know the difference between the two.

Or don't know what kind of music to listen to while drinking a classic martini or two or three with good friends?

## **THE MUSIC**

Operatic pop, popera, cross-over, musical theater: call it what you will, but you have to acknowledge that it has survived and thrived in today's world of music. There are several reasons for that: 1) It draws big

crowds, 2) It pays well, and 3) It attracts a new audience. In other words, it's in demand! It's hot!! It's sexy!!! What's there not to like? (add: it looks good. It sounds good, and it makes people feel good). My grandmother, Olive Guest Parker, introduced me to cross-over music when I was a kid, although I didn't realize that's what it was. When she was singing on stage for a concert or on tour as an oratorio singer she sang the music of Hayden, Handel, Mozart, etc. At Christmastime she sang both traditional and popular Christmas tunes, usually in their original language (I can recall her singing *Stille Nacht* many times but never *Silent Night*). At home, when it was just the family, she frequently sang, hummed or even whistled the pop musical songs of the day. And those were the days when Lerner and Lowe, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter, etc. were at their peak.

#### Operatic pop

The history of operatic pop, popera or musical theater is a subgenre of pop music history.

Simply put, it is music that is performed in an operatic singing style (good luck defining that) or a song, theme or motif from what is considered to be "classical music (again, good luck in defining that) which is stylized or played in a popular manner. Some scholars believe operatic pop evolved from the musicians of Tin Pan Alley in the early 1900s. I suspect my grandmother would have been surprised to learn that. Of more importance was the arrival of millions of Italian immigrants to the United States, who turned the new Metropolitan Opera House into an Italians-first company; workers from the south who brought the popular love songs of Naples with them, and even the gondoliers of Venice who sang Puccini love songs while working on the fishing boats and ferries of New York and Boston. It is no accident that Enrico Caruso, the highest paid entertainer in American history was also the most popular and a baseball fan! Operatic tunes found their way into popular music on Vaudeville, musical comedies, jazz and operetta. Although it went into decline during the Roaring '20s, pop opera remains popular and still derives much of its inspiration from opera seria.

In the 1980s the solo careers of operatic tenors Luciano Pavarotti, Jose Carreras and Placido Domingo and their joint appearances as The Three Tenors brought new popularity to popera. Other singers, such as Andrea Bocelli, Josh Groban, and Katherine Jenkins; took songs with operatic origins and made them popular hits. Bocelli, in particular, soon became a leading representative of the subgenre. In the 2000s, singers and singing groups devoted primarily to operatic pop built on this renewed success. Groups like IL Divo and Amici Forever have achieved popularity with the mix of "contemporary pop with operatic style" characteristic of operatic pop.] The subgenre is often performed by classical crossover singers and acts, although that field is much broader in the types of music it encompasses. "Popera" performances, such as those by the Three Tenors, have reached larger audiences and brought in greater profits than typical for operatic music. Mega-star popera stars, which would spend weeks preparing for a few performances of a role for fees in the few hundreds of thousands of dollars discovered they could make millions in a single performance or tens of millions on an extended tour. It's no coincidence that Pavarotti's estate was still worth over \$100 million even after he paid his first wife of 35 years a settlement of \$35 million. His second marriage lasted four years until his death and his widow was well taken care of, but the bulk of his estate went to his children and his charity. It is said his funeral in 2007 attracted the largest crowd of any Italian funeral since that of Verdi. After his death it is rumored he had considered leaving his second wife, committing suicide, etc. but died of pancreatic cancer. In the meantime his popera recordings still sell very well.

#### Operatic pop solo singers

Andrea Bocelli, Charlotte Church, Hayley Westenra, Josh Groban, Jackie Evancho, Janette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, Katherine Jenkins, Lesley Garrett, Luciano Pavarotti, Paul Potts, Russell Watson, Rufus Wainwright, Sarah Brightman, and Sergio Franchi are names most opera or pop singer fans would recognize.

There are 73 operatic pop solo singers listed on wiki. Check out the list, explore the links, and see who is doing what by whom. You might be pleasantly surprised.

#### Operatic pop groups

The Tenors, Celtic Woman, Il Divo, Il Volo, Opera Babes, The Ten Tenors, The Three Tenors all groups known for their media appearances, in person concerts and CD sales. Most of the popular groups have appeared in major venues in Las Vegas and arenas around the country and why not? They can make more money in a three night gig in Las Vegas than they can in a month of touring in the Rust Belt.

Here again there are 21 groups listed on wiki. See how many of them you recognize and who's touring to your city soon.

Wiki, in its article on operatic pop, lists articles such as:

Andrea Bocelli: The king of Operatic pop, The Sydney Morning Herald, August 28, 2004

Caspari, Abigail (February 27, 2008). "Brennan: Dame Kiri should apologise". New Zealand: Rotorua Daily Post. Retrieved September 24, 2015. A Rotorua opera singer is calling for Dame Kiri Te Kanawa to publicly apologise to Hayley Westenra and other 'popera' stars for calling them fake singers.

Graff, Gary (March 17, 2004). "Bachstreet Boy: Classical singer carves niche for operatic pop". Reading Eagle. The New York Times Syndicate. Retrieved September 24, 2015. Groban has carved more of a mainstream niche for operatic pop vocals than such predecessors as Andrea Bocelli or even Luciano Pavarotti.

Shepherd, John, ed. (2005). Continuum encyclopedia of popular music of the world. London: Continuum. p. 233. ISBN 0826474365. Italy has capitalized on its stereotypical image as the cradle of bel canto, as in the case of the 'operatic pop' of Luciano Pavarotti and Andrea Bocelli.

BBC Proms 2014: The Official Guide. Random House. 2014. p. 28. ISBN 1448142652. If anyone can compete with Wainwright for the crown of operatic pop...

"Romina Arena: All hail the 'Queen of Popera'", The ArbitronOnline, December 6, 2007

Gallo, Phil (November 12, 2011). "Romeo's Escape: Vittorio Grigolo balances opera roles with blues, jazz and other new directions". Billboard: 59. Retrieved September 24, 2015. 'My goal is to enlarge the audience [for opera] by using the media of our time,' he says, using the term 'popera' as a definition of a viable art form rather than as a derisive insult.

McKinley, Jr., James C. (September 4, 2013). "Il Divo Is Coming to Broadway". The New York Times (Artsbeat). Retrieved September 24, 2015. Il Divo, the operatic pop vocal group, is coming to Broadway...

"Italian popera trio among Eurovision favourites". Italy: The Local. May 19, 2015. Retrieved September 24, 2015.

I'm sure you can find others in the tabloids and music journals.

As I mentioned earlier operatic pop is also known as popera (especially in Italy) and as musical theater from New York to London.

But not every world class music capital treats operatic pop, popera or musical theater the same way. For instance, Vienna has a very specific way of handling such music and even similar music by the same composer may be performed in one theater but not another. Mozart's operas are a case in point.

The opera house known as Wiener Staatsoper is known for its serious works for those who can afford its serious prices (34-239 euros is the norm and blockbusters or special productions (or stars) can go even higher. It is one of the leading opera houses in the world whose orchestra members at the same time make up the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, one of the worlds best. This season it is doing two of Mozart's operas,

Marriage of Figaro and Don Giovanni. Right now it would 245 euros (or USD 261) to see Turandot by Puccini sitting in the same seat.

The Vienna Volksoper is the second major opera house in the city. It puts on around three hundred performances of twenty-five German-language productions (plays, musicals, operettas and occasionally a serious opera) a year. It was originally built as a theater and eventually converted into a “peoples” or popular music hall venue. Tickets cost from 52-111 euros. This season it is doing Mozart’s Barber of Seville, Don Giovanni and Magic Flute, as well as two American musicals, “How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying” and “Man of La Mancha”.

Both theaters frequently run performances of Strauss’s Fledermaus, a perennial favorite with locals (at New Year’s) any tourists. The third Vienna theater owned by the Austrian Government is the City Theater which also occasionally does musical events.

Musical theater has been popular in America for years and well-known opera singers have often appeared on Broadway (e.g. Examples: Enzo Pinza in South Pacific, Robert Weede in Most Happy Fella) and Broadway shows such as Les Miserables or Phantom of the Opera are operas, even in name.

#### THE DRINK

Speaking of grandmother as I was, have I ever written about her close friendship with Mary Eddy Baker? Yes, that Mary Eddy Baker! Baker was fond of religion, science, money and men, and not necessarily in that order. My grandmother was fond of music, drink, money and men, and not necessarily in that order either. And thereby hangs a tale. I think the common bond the two shared was found in their search for The Holy Grail. Baker was looking for the cup and my grandmother was looking for something to fill it.

It’s long been debated whether martinis are for men or women.

Traditionally martinis are made with gin for men who are serious drinkers and vodka martinis are made for women want to get seriously drunk. Appletini, golf leaf martini, chocolate martini, etc. are for those who are trying to be fashionable, cute or flaunt their wealth.

If you ask for your martini to be “Shaken, not stirred” you are either showing you’re a James Bond fan or trying to get a laugh out of the bartender.

#### ”The Best Martini Olives For Your Health, Scientifically Proven”

By Mary Eddy Baker and Olive Parker

Green, black or stuffed, olives are a classic accompaniment to martinis. Choosing the correct type of olive is key to serving a traditional martini.

An olive’s brine and acidity give the vodka or gin a slight flavor pop – like adding a small amount of sea salt to a perfectly cooked dish.

The history of the martini is murky, but it is believed to have originated in the historic California town of Martinez during the gold rush era. Olives are an important component of 19th century Mexican-American cuisine, and could often be found served as a condiment in beverages as well. There are still saloons in California that serve an inch deep layer of stuffed green olives in every pitcher of tap-drawn beer.

A proper martini olive should be:

Pitted or stuffed.

Fresh or recently preserved. Olives from an old jar may have softened in the brine and become too salty or pickled.

Preserved in brine, not in oil, which will leave a greasy slick and will interfere with taste

Firm, but not too crunchy. Types of olives that may be too soft: Kalamata, Sevillano.

Green, traditionally – but some people prefer the sweet, smoky flavor of a black olive. Black olives tend to be softer, so be careful to choose fresh or recently preserved black olives.

On the small side. Some people like the larger olives, but traditionalists may object to large olives, like those served with vegetable-garnished bloody marys. The smaller olives are visually more pleasing in a standard cocktail stem; fit easily 3 to a toothpick; are generally both riper and firmer than larger olives; and are easier to munch on while still conducting polite conversation.

Olives stuffed with goat cheese or blue cheese may be well received, but the success of the combination may depend on how firm the cheese is – you don't want to end up with gummy bits of cheese or a milky sediment in the drink. Cheese-stuffed olives should be kept chilled before serving.

Other olive stuffings that pair well with gin and vodka martinis include garlic, onion, anchovies, almonds, lemon rind or various sweet and hot peppers, including the traditional pimiento-stuffed olives. Each type gives the delicate liquor a distinctive spin and flavor.

Spear 1 to 3 olives crosswise on a decorative toothpick.

Rinse the olives briefly to remove excess brine and any loose bits of herbs or spices.

Serve either in the cocktail, or laid across the top of the glass.

To have a little fun with stuffed olives, serve 3 different kinds on 1 toothpick.

A dirty martini calls for the addition of a small amount of olive juice or brine. The best choice would be a bottle of actual pressed olive juice made specifically for cocktails.

Brine from a jar of pickled olives works too, but taste the brine first and become familiar with how sour or salty it is. Both gin and vodka have light, delicate flavors that can be easily overwhelmed with the addition of too much salt or vinegar. When in doubt, add half the amount recommended by your cocktail recipe, taste and then adjust.

Before adding olive juice from a jar, strain it briefly through a fine cocktail strainer or a small square of cheesecloth to catch any stray bits of spice and herbs.

Tip

If you don't mind a little zip in your dirty martini, you might try using pepperoncini juice instead of olive juice.

## CONCLUSION

If you don't happen to have someone to share your favorite martini with, I suggest you find a copy of "Florence Foster Jenkins", a 2016 film, with Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant. That way you'll have one of the best actresses of our time and one of the handsomest actors of our time to share one with you.

You may have noted that I did not include any YouTube links to operatic pop performances. I did that on purpose to encourage you to go and dig up some new performers.

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# Eternal Sunshine Game Section

## Diplomacy, "Milk and Trash", 2015A, F 11

**Austria (Jack McHugh – jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com):** A Budapest Supports A Rumania – Galicia (No Such Unit), A Trieste Unordered (Holds), A Bohemia - Munich (\*Fails\*), A Bulgaria Supports A Syria – Greece, F Eastern Mediterranean Convoys A Syria – Greece, A Rumania – Galicia, A Serbia Supports A Trieste, A Silesia Supports A Livonia – Warsaw, A Smyrna – Armenia, A Syria - Greece (\*Fails\*),

A Tyrolia Supports A Bohemia - Munich (\*Cut\*).

**England (Mark Firth – mogcate "of" me.com):** F Baltic Sea Supports A Berlin – Prussia, A London – Denmark, F Naples - Ionian Sea, F North Sea Convoys A London – Denmark, F Rome – Naples, F Spain(sc) - Gulf of Lyon, A St Petersburg Supports A Warsaw – Moscow, F Tunis Supports F Naples - Ionian Sea, F Tyrrhenian Sea Supports F Naples - Ionian Sea.

**Germany (Jim Burgess – jfburgess "of" gmail.com):** A Berlin – Prussia, A Burgundy Supports A Munich, F Gulf of Bothnia – Livonia, A Kiel – Berlin, A Munich Supports A Kiel - Berlin (\*Cut\*), A Piedmont - Tyrolia (\*Fails\*), A Ruhr Supports A Munich, A Tuscany – Rome, A Warsaw - Moscow.

**Italy (John Biehl – jerbil "of" shaw.ca):** F Apulia Supports A Venice, F Ionian Sea - Aegean Sea, A Venice Hold.

**Russia (Kevin Wilson – ckevinw "of" comcast.net):** A Livonia – Warsaw, ~~A Moscow Supports A Livonia – Warsaw~~ (\*Dislodged\*, retreat to Sevastopol or Ukraine or OTB).



**All Draw Proposals Fail**  
**Deadline for W 11/S 12 is April 25th at 7am my time**

#### Supply Center Chart

Austria: Ankara, Budapest, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Rumania, Serbia, Sevastopol?, Smyrna, Trieste, Vienna=9 or 10, Even or Remove 1  
England: Brest, Denmark, Edinburgh, Holland, Liverpool, London, Naples, Norway, Spain, St Petersburg, Tunis=11, Build 2  
Germany: Belgium, Berlin, Kiel, Marseilles, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Portugal, Rome, Sweden=10, Build 1  
Italy: Greece, Venice=2, Remove 1  
Russia: Warsaw, Sevastopol?=1 or 2, Even or Remove 1

#### PRESS

**Italian Pastrami to Flapping Gums:** Thing is, you, AH, failed to assist in removing Turkey when we had the early opportunity ( & so I never had the forces which I should have to hold in the West) so quit whining now.

**Boob to Flap Jack:** I feel for you, buddy, at least a little. Mr. Biehl can be quite a trip, can't he? You'll be pleased to see that we're continuing to cut him down to size, and soon you won't have to worry about negotiating with him.... ;-)

**Boob to Doug:** I'm supposed to be recovered from my back surgery, more than six months out, but tell my back that... wow, the last couple of days have been quite a trip, I finally feel like I can move a bit though, pray it continues... I continue to worry about you and hope your situation improves, and it can, it can...

**Doug – Boob:** After four months sleeping on my couch, \*I\* may need back surgery....

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**General Deadline for the Next Issue of Eternal  
Sunshine: April 25th, 2017 at 7:00am my time.  
Hope to See You Then!**

