Celestial Harmonies: Opera and the Universe

Opera · Answer Key · 10 Questions

1. Which contemporary opera by Philip Glass depicts the final moments of the life of Johannes Kepler, the astronomer who formulated the laws of planetary motion?

A) Kepler
B) The Astronomy of Sound
C) Einstein on the Beach
D) Orphée

2. In the prologue of the opera 'The Death of Klinghoffer' by John Adams, the chorus refers to 'Exiles' who are compared to the movement of which specific celestial body?

A) The Moon
B) Venus
C) The Sun
D) Mars

3. The libretto of Leos Janácek's 'The Excursions of Mr. Broucek to the Moon' utilizes which satirical literary source to describe the inhabitant's lunar society?

A) Svatopluk Cech
B) H.G. Wells
C) Jules Verne
D) Cyrano de Bergerac

4. In Gustav Holst's 'The Planets', which movement is often cited as a precursor to the dramatic, bombastic brass writing found in 20th-century space-themed film opera and soundtracks?

A) Mars, the Bringer of War
B) Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
C) Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
D) Neptune, the Mystic

5. Which opera, premiered in 2011 by composer Iain Bell, explores the life and internal universe of the astronomer who discovered the planet Uranus?

A) A Harlot's Progress
B) The Discovery of Uranus
C) The Comet
D) Herschel's Vision

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6. The 17th-century opera 'Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria' by Monteverdi features a prologue with Human Fragility being challenged by which mythological figure often associated with the cosmic order?

A) Time
B) The Sun
C) Fortune
D) Love

7. In the opera 'Doctor Atomic' by John Adams, which physicist's internal thoughts regarding the cosmic implications of the atom bomb are portrayed during the 'Batter My Heart' aria?

A) Robert Oppenheimer
B) Enrico Fermi
C) Edward Teller
D) Richard Feynman

8. Which opera by Richard Wagner features a narrative arc that some musicologists interpret as a metaphor for the celestial harmony of the spheres?

A) Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg
B) Parsifal
C) Der Ring des Nibelungen
D) Tristan und Isolde

9. The opera 'Galileo Galilei' by Philip Glass utilizes a specific structural framing device to reflect the astronomer's conflict with the Church regarding which astronomical model?

A) Heliocentrism
B) Geocentrism
C) Stellar Parallax
D) Nebular Hypothesis

10. In the opera 'The Voyage' by Philip Glass, the second act depicts the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas, but the work as a whole is framed around the expansion of which scientific concept?

A) Interstellar exploration
B) Biological evolution
C) Quantum mechanics
D) Plate tectonics

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