Puccini's Turandot and the Environmental Assessment

We hope that an expanded environmental assessment approach will bring us closer to sustainability.

Environmental assessment introduces the state of the environment; this sounds logical. Originally, only the state of the environment was targeted but nothing else. The shoemaker makes shoes.

Logically when the Opera House plays Puccini's Turandot, the musicians play the music composed by Puccini and nothing else. This also sounds logical.

But life is not logical.

If environmental assessment does not give an overview of driving forces and pressures, then we cannot understand the state and trends of the environment. A useful environmental assessment lists possible responses to ease the work of decision makers. In addition, for sustainability reasons, social and economic relations must be taken into consideration as well. Technical, political and even ethical relations also play roles. This is why environmental assessment has not focused solely on the environment, but has also included economic, social, technical, political, ethical and other perspectives. Thus, assessments can be a useful and effective tool for elaborating responses. They are not sector-focused and simply logical any more, but play an important role for decision makers.

Puccini's Turandot is not simple either.

During composition of the opera, maestro Puccini died. So the music that we usually hear after Liù's death in the performance was finished by another composer, maestro Franco Alfano. It sounds as though Puccini write it, because Alfano's editing aimed to be as faithful as possible to Puccini. Thus the story is complete: princess Turandot and prince Kalaf finally find love.

In the same way, we hope that an expanded environmental assessment approach will bring us to a happy ending.

Harmony with the past, present and future, as targeted by environmental assessments: finale of Puccini's Turandot. Source: https://sfopera.com/1718season/201718-season/turandot/video/turandot-trailer/.

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