



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA EDUCATION

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

SYNOPSIS

Roderick Usher is the last surviving male member of his family, living as a recluse in his vast ancestral home with his twin sister, Madeline. She is slowly dying of a disease for which her doctor seems unable or unwilling to find a cause or a cure. Roderick begs an old friend to visit. Shortly after the friend's arrival, Madeline dies and is buried in a vault beneath the house. In an attempt to calm the increasingly distracted Roderick, his friend reads to him from a medieval romance. As the climax of the tale is reached, the figure of Madeline appears—she had been buried alive and has clawed her way out of the vault to find her brother. Roderick is overcome by horror and as he and Madeline both confront death, the House of Usher collapses around them.