

THE ATLANTA OPERA
PRESENTS

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

WAGNER



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THE FLYING DUTCHMAN WAGNER

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Thank you for bringing your students to the Final Dress Rehearsal of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*!

This study guide has been developed to help you and your students explore *The Flying Dutchman*, as well as to familiarize students with the world of opera (vocabulary, history, etc.) The guide approaches these subjects via a wide range of disciplines, including language arts, reading, math, science, problem-solving, and social studies. In using this guide, we hope you will feel free to adapt pages or activities to best meet the needs of your students. Please make this guide your own!

Thank you again for allowing us to share this experience with you. We value your feedback and will take it into account in planning future education programs. We look forward to hearing from you, your students, administration, and/or parents following the performance.

Sincerely,

The Atlanta Opera
Education Department
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Atlanta, GA 30318

404-881-8801
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Costume sketches of the Factory Workers from *The Flying Dutchman*. (rendering: Jacob A. Climer)

PRE-PERFORMANCE

ACTIVITIES PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE OPERA

Are you worried about how to act or what to wear? You are not the only one! Opera stereotypes can make the art form seem intimidating to lots of people. Having an idea of what to expect at the performance may make it easier to enjoy your experience. Here are some suggestions of things you can do before The Atlanta Opera visits your school or community venue.

START WITH THE STORY

In simple terms, an opera is a story set to music. Before the performance, review the plot synopsis of *The Flying Dutchman*. Ask students to consider the story, characters, and setting of the opera. Use the following questions to lead a class discussion:

- What is this opera about?
- What is the time period?
- Who are the main characters?
- What struggles do the characters face?
- What are their relationships to each other?
- What do you expect to see and hear at the opera?

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY TERMS

Refer to the Glossary of Opera Terms. Discuss with the students which of these terms they may hear and/or see during the performance.

DESIGN A PROMOTIONAL POSTER

Create a poster to promote the upcoming performance of *The Flying Dutchman*. Display the poster in your school and send samples to The Atlanta Opera at education@atlantaopera.org.



Students at the Cobb Energy Centre for the Atlanta Opera's Student Short performance. (photo: Raftermen / Andrew Snook)

OPERA MYTHS

Many people have preconceived ideas about the opera. Read the truth behind some of the most popular opera myths and see if they answer some of your questions about the opera as well!

MYTH 1:

OPERA IS BORING & STUFFY

Not true! Operas tell some of the most interesting, scandalous, and beautiful stories of all time. It is not unusual to find love triangles, murders, fatal illnesses, and messages from beyond the grave.

MYTH 2:

OPERA IS SUNG IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE SO I WON'T UNDERSTAND THE STORY

We can help! It is true that many operas are sung in languages other than English. Since most people in our audience do not speak other languages, we project English translations, called "supertitles," on the screen above the stage. This way, you can follow along even if you do not understand the language. You also can read the synopsis of the opera before you arrive. Knowing the story will also help you follow along.

MYTH 3:

I NEED TO WEAR A TUXEDO OR A BALL GOWN TO THE OPERA

Some people like to dress up when they go to an opera performance but there is no dress code to attend an opera. You will see people wearing everything from jeans to ball gowns. Dressing up can be part of the fun of attending an opera performance but you should wear whatever makes you comfortable. The opera is a place for everybody.

MYTH 4:

OPERA SINGERS JUST SCREECH & HIT HIGH NOTES ALL THE TIME

Most of the music we listen to today is electronically reproduced and amplified by speakers. Opera is one of the only places you'll hear singers perform without a microphone. All the sounds you will hear at the opera are natural and coming straight from the singers' throats and the orchestra's instruments to your ears. Opera singers have trained for years to project their sound and make it larger than life. While you may not be accustomed to live, unamplified singing, it can be a wonderful experience if you think about how much skill is required.



Students arriving at the Cobb Energy Centre to see an Atlanta Opera performance. (photo: Raftermen)

Here are a few more tips to make your trip to the opera more comfortable.

REMEMBER:

The opera is a live performance. You can hear the performers on stage and that means they can hear you too! Please refrain from talking or whispering during the opera. It is distracting to others around you as well as to the singers. Please do not leave your seat during the performance.

Please turn off all cell phones, beeping watches and anything else that may go "beep!"

Please do not take photographs or video or audio recordings of the performance. The light can affect the singers on stage.

If you like what you have seen and heard, let the performers know! It is okay to applaud at the end of songs, called arias, and at the end of a scene. You can even call out "bravo" (to the men on stage), "brava" (to the women) and "bravi" (for all on stage). And of course, a standing ovation is always welcome!

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

WAGNER

MUSIC

Richard Wagner

LIBRETTO

Richard Wagner

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Jan. 2, 1843 at Semperoper, Dresden

CONDUCTOR

Arthur Fagen

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

Tomer Zvulun

SCENIC & COSTUME DESIGNER

Jacob A. Climer

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Amith Chandrashaker

PROJECTION DESIGNER

S. Katy Tucker

WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER

J. Jared Janas

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Ben Rawson

CHOREOGRAPHER

Meg Gillentine

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR/CHORUS MASTER

Rolando Salazar

CAST (IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE)

DALAND

Kristinn Sigmundsson

STEUERMANN

Justin Stolz*

DUTCHMAN

Wayne Tigges

MARY

Olivia Vote

SENTA

Melody Moore

ERIK

Jay Hunter Morris

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Brenna Corner*

MUSICAL PREPARATION

Stefano Sarzani, Valerie Pool*

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Brian August

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Renée Varnas, Joshua Stewart

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Anna Eck

THE ATLANTA OPERA

GENERAL & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Tomer Zvulun

CARL & SALLY GABLE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Arthur Fagen

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION

Dave Smith

DIRECTOR OF ARTISTIC ADMINISTRATION

Lauren Bailey

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Micah Fortson

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Rae Weimer

DIRECTOR OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Scott Hazleton

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Holly Hanchey

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION MANAGER

Jessica Kiger

Performed in German with English supertitles

Approximate running time: 2 hours 30 minutes plus two intermissions

**member of The Atlanta Opera Studio*

Scenery and costumes for this production were constructed at Theatrical Builds and are jointly owned by The Atlanta Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and Cincinnati Opera.

CHARACTER MAP

WHO'S CONNECTED HOW



THE DUTCHMAN

Captain of a cursed ship called The Flying Dutchman. He is doomed to wander the seas forever and can only be saved by true love.



DALAND

A Norwegian sailor, father of Senta



SENTA

Daland's daughter; former girlfriend of Erik; enamored with the tale of The Dutchman



ERIK

A huntsman, in love with Senta



MARY

Senta's nurse

SYNOPSIS

WHAT'S THE OPERA ABOUT?

OVERTURE

A tremendous storm rages at sea.

ACT I

A ROCKY SEACOAST

Daland's ship has dropped anchor, and as they furl the sails, the Norwegian sailors chant Hohohe! Hallohe! Daland, who has been exploring the shore, appears to announce they have been blown seven miles off course. He tells the crew to get some rest. As the Steersman keeps watch, he sings of seeing his girlfriend again after surviving the terrible storm ("Mit Gewitter und Sturm" — "Through thunder and storm"). He falls asleep.

Once more the storm begins to rage and a red-sailed ship, the "Flying Dutchman," appears. In silence the sails are revealed and its captain, the Dutchman, comes ashore. In a long monologue ("Die Frist ist um" — "The time is up"), he explains how a curse has forced him to sail continuously, able to come ashore only once every seven years to seek redemption. He has often sought death by plunging into the sea or driving onto reefs but to no avail. Was the angel who won him a means of deliverance only mocking him? His only hope is the coming of the Day of Judgment.

Daland, from the deck of his ship, sees the Flying Dutchman, hails its master, and asks if his ship was also damaged in the storm. The Dutchman tells him a little of his story and offers Daland a rich treasure if he will shelter him in his home. He then asks if the Norwegian captain has a daughter. When the answer is in the affirmative, the Dutchman asks if she might be his wife, offering all of his treasure in return. Daland greedily agrees. When the weather permits, the two ships sail off toward Daland's home.

ACT II

A FACTORY

The factory wall is dominated by a large painting. A group of young women spin and sing of their lovers' return ("Summ und Brumm" — "Whir and whirl"). Senta, Daland's daughter, sits dreamily to one side and gazes at the painting. Mary, Senta's nurse, asks her to join the group, but she does not hear. When the other girls tease her about being in love with the handsome young hunter Erik, she finally reacts and angrily tells them to stop their stupid song. She asks Mary to sing the ballad of the Dutchman, but the nurse refuses. Senta sings it herself, and we learn more of the story of the Dutchman. Desperately attempting to round a



A set rendering of the Dutchman's first appearance. (rendering: Jacob A. Climer)

SYNOPSIS

WHAT'S THE OPERA ABOUT?

cape during a storm, he had cursed and sworn, "In all eternity I'll not give up!" Satan heard, took him at his word, and doomed him to sail on forever. An angel took pity on him and promised redemption if he could find a wife willing to die for him. Senta cries out that she wants to be that wife.

Erik appears, having overheard her last outburst, and is terrified for her. He announces that Daland's ship is approaching. He pleads with Senta to overcome her infatuation and relates a dream in which he saw two men on shore, her father and a stranger, the Dutchman ("Auf hohen Felsen lag ich träumend" — "I lay dreaming on the lofty crag"). He saw Senta throw herself at the Dutchman's feet, ardently kiss him and sail out to sea with him. Senta hears nothing, she is mesmerized by her vision. Erik rushes off in horror.

Daland and the Dutchman enter and her father bids Senta make the Dutchman welcome. She recognizes him as the man in the picture and, while Senta and the Dutchman stare at each other, Daland tells his daughter of the stranger's offer, showing her the jewels he has been given ("Mögst du, mein Kind" — "Would you,

my child"). Seeing that the two are interested only in each other, Daland leaves. In a long duet, both express wonder in the fulfillment of their dreams. Senta tells him she is always obedient to her father, she will marry him and hopes to be the means to his redemption. He tries to warn her of the danger she faces, but she is adamant; she will save him. Daland returns to ask if the welcome home feast can be combined with a betrothal. Once more Senta vows to be true until death.

ACT III

A BAY WITH A ROCKY SHORE

The sailors are celebrating ("Steuermann, lass die Wacht" — "Steersman, leave your watch"), but the Flying Dutchman is dark and silent. As the girls and women arrive with food and drink, they call to the dark ship offering them some refreshment. When there is no answer, the men remark on the resemblance between the strange ship and that of the Dutchman, telling the girls not to wake the crew members for they are ghosts. The townspeople finally give up and start to feast. Soon there are signs of stirring on the Dutchman's ship and, although it is calm everywhere else, a storm comes up around it. Its ghoulish crew sings of the curse and asks if the captain is back with a wife. The two groups of sailors start a singing match, but the Norwegians give up and, making the sign of the cross, leave their ship. The Dutch crew laughs and then falls silent.

Senta runs from the house followed by Erik. How could she forget her vow to him and pledge herself to someone she has never met? She tries to make him stop (she is obeying a higher duty), but he reminds her of the day she swore her eternal faith to him ("Willst jenes Tag du nicht mehr entsinnen" — "Don't you remember that day ..."). The Dutchman overhears and, thinking her promise to him was not sincere, cries out despairingly that he is lost. He says farewell and orders his crew to make ready to sail. Senta tries to stop him, but he releases her from her vow. He tells her he is saving her from an awful fate; he is the Dutchman ("Erfahre das Geschick" — "Learn the fate"). If she had sworn before God she would be damned, but as she only swore to him, she is free to break her vow. But Senta has known his story all along. As Erik and the others plead with her, she throws herself into the sea crying, "Hier steh' ich treu dir bis zum Tod!" ("Here I stand, faithful to you until death"). The Flying Dutchman sinks and Senta and the Dutchman are seen reunited in a better world than this one.



costume rendering: Jacob A. Climer

Courtesy of San Diego Opera's Operapedia

LOST & FOUND AT SEA

REAL LIFE, A FANTASTICAL IMAGINATION, & THEATER COLLIDE TO CREATE *THE FLYING DUTCHMAN*

BY NOEL MORRIS

People used to speak of *The Flying Dutchman* as if it were a gateway drug to Wagner. Coming from the composer who inspired some of the classic opera stereotypes (marathon singing by women in Viking helmets, for example), Dutchman is, as the story goes, a more easily digestible serving of Wagner — it's short and entertaining.

In truth, since the advent of supertitles, all Wagner is entertaining. To understand Wagner fans, you have to think of them as the original binge-watchers. Yes, "Game of Thrones" has swords, sorcery, warrior women, bastards, a cunning dwarf, incest, dragons, and world domination, but Wagner wrote about all those things 150 years before George R. R. Martin.

Dutchman seems to bear a relationship to events in the composer's life, which, given his proclivity for fantastical creatures, wasn't always the case. In 1839, Richard Wagner had been serving as conductor at the Court Theatre in what is now the Latvian capital of Riga, on the Baltic Sea. He and his wife, Minna, had lived extravagantly. When he lost his job, he decided to try

his luck in Paris. As they prepared to leave, Wagner sold their furniture (some of which hadn't been paid for) and held a benefit for himself. Not surprisingly, his creditors persuaded local authorities to seize his passport.

Under the cover of darkness, the composer, his wife and their pet Newfoundland stole passed armed border guards and plotted an indirect route to the French capital (they also had to avoid German creditors). It was a harrowing overland journey. By one account, their coach overturned, causing Minna to miscarry. In nine days, they traveled 270 miles to Baltiysk, where they dodged harbor police and boarded a ship bound for London via Copenhagen.

"This sea journey will remain eternally engraved on my memory," wrote Wagner. "It lasted three and a half weeks [instead of one] and was beset by accidents. Three times we were caught in the most violent storms." According to accounts, the captain was forced to steer the ship into a fjord.

How this journey found its way into Wagner's work is rich fodder for discussions among Wagnerites (think Comic-Con fans). They are quick to point out, for example, that the composer suggested the granite walls of the fjord, not just in the scenery, but in how he divided his singers, scoring echoes right into the music.



The Atlanta Opera's 2002 production of *The Flying Dutchman* at The Fox Theatre. (photo: J. D. Scott)

PRODUCTION NOTE

ABOUT THIS SHOW

"Sailing between the Norwegian reefs made a striking impression on my imagination," Wagner wrote. "The legend of the Flying Dutchman, as confirmed by the sailors, took on a very definite and individual coloring in my mind such as only adventures at sea could inspire."

According to tradition, both the ship and its captain are called the Flying Dutchman. Over the centuries, sailors have repeated this maritime legend, reporting and embellishing encounters with the ghostly vessel.

An 1881 journal entry by England's Prince of Wales (future King George V) reported "a strange red light as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the masts, spars, and sails of a brig 200 yards distant stood out in strong relief as she came up on the port bow ... but on arriving there no vestige nor any sign whatever of any material ship was to be seen either near or right away to the horizon, the night being clear and the sea calm."

The backstory to this legend set the stage for everything that happens in the opera: Hendrick Van der Decken, a Dutch sea captain, attempted to round the Cape of Good Hope in a squall. His crew begged him to take safe harbor, but the Dutchman retorted: "May I be eternally damned if I do, though I should beat about here till the day of judgment." Presto change — his proclamation is his curse.

Certainly, Wagner's 1839 journey put wind in his sails. One can even draw comparisons between the wandering seaman and the wandering composer: "I often seem to myself," he wrote, "like the Flying Dutchman and his shipmates, who are tossed about forever on the cold waves."

As the opera took shape the following year, however, it wasn't the title character who emerged as the pivotal personality. It was the heroine, Senta. She is the Beauty to the Dutchman's Beast.

As a girl, Senta sees her whole life laid before her: marriage, household duties, village life. She sees it and longs to escape it (not unlike Belle in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*). Wagner's libretto, based on Heinrich Heine's 1831 novel, argues that Senta and the Dutchman save each other: He is freed from his curse, and she is freed from banality.

Although *The Flying Dutchman* is Wagner's fourth opera, you might call it the one in which Wagner becomes Wagner. It's the earliest of his works performed regularly, and shows the mature composer

for his striking originality and mastery of theater. Notice how he adds voltage to Senta's appearance by keeping her out of sight until the opera's midpoint. Then, at the moment when most composers would cue the soaring love duet, Wagner conjures a spellbinding stillness between the lovers.

Wagner's imagination, at times, did exceed all practical considerations. At the end of *The Flying Dutchman*, it's incumbent upon the stage director to interpret and communicate these directions:

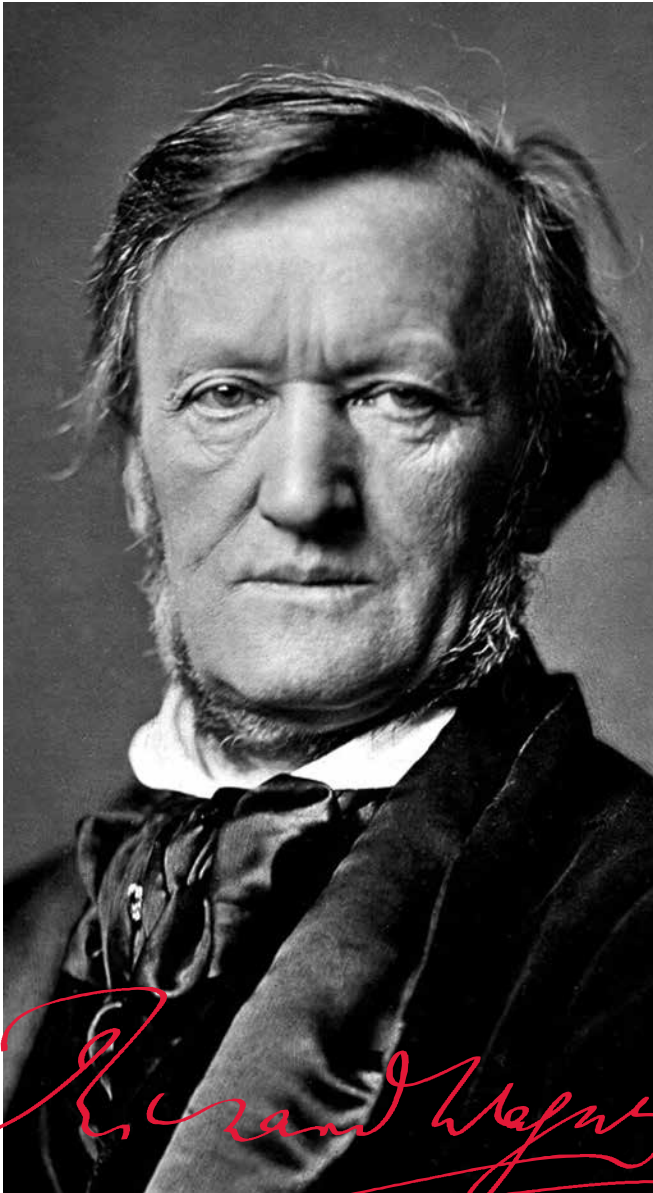
"She throws herself into the sea. Immediately the Dutchman's ship disappears in the waves. The sea rises high, and is then drawn down in a whirlpool. In the red light of the rising sun, the glorified forms of Senta and the Dutchman are seen, in a close embrace, rising from the wreck of the vessel and soaring upward."

How does one stage that? Where do they go?

Wagner was nothing if not preternaturally ambitious. The roles he conceived, the vocal demands, the stagecraft, the orchestral demand, and the ideas contained within his output exploded art into a whole new realm, one that continues to sweep audiences into its embrace and carry them on an ecstatic joyride.



The Atlanta Opera's 2009 production of *The Flying Dutchman* at The Cobb Energy Centre marking Tomer Zvulun's Atlanta Opera directorial debut. (photo: J. D. Scott)



RICHARD WAGNER

Impress your friends with these interesting facts:

- Richard Wagner was the subject of much social and political controversy. He was an extreme nationalist. Because of his political involvement, he was forced to leave Germany in 1849 and live in exile for 12 years.
- A noted womanizer, Wagner's second (and much younger) wife was Cosima von Bulow, the daughter of contemporary composer, Franz Liszt.
- Wagner transformed musical thought through his idea of Gesamtkunstwerk ("total artwork"), the synthesis of all the poetic, visual, musical and dramatic arts. This is epitomized by his monumental four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. A full performance of the complete "Ring Cycle" takes place over four nights at the opera, with a total playing time of about 15 hours. The first and shortest opera, *Das Rheingold*, typically lasts two and a half hours, while the final and longest, *Götterdämmerung*, can take up to six and a half hours in performance. Don't worry, *The Flying Dutchman* is only 3 hours.
- You've probably heard Wagner and didn't even realize it. One of the most popular wedding marches, known as "Here Comes the Bride," is the melody from the "Bridal Chorus" of *Lohengrin*. In the opera, it is sung as the bride and groom leave the ceremony and go into the wedding chamber. The calamitous marriage of Lohengrin and Elsa, which reaches irretrievable breakdown twenty minutes after the chorus has been sung, has failed to discourage this widespread use of the piece.



TOMER ZVULUN STAGE DIRECTOR

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *THE FLYING DUTCHMAN*, 2009

General & Artistic Director of The Atlanta Opera since 2013, Israeli-born Tomer Zvulun is also one of opera's most exciting stage directors, earning consistent praise for his creative vision, often described as cinematic and fresh. His work has been presented by prestigious opera houses around the world, including The Metropolitan Opera, the opera companies of Seattle, San Diego, Minnesota, Boston, Cleveland, Dallas, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Buenos Aires, Wexford, New Orleans and Wolf Trap, as well as leading educational institutes and universities such as The Juilliard School, Indiana University, Boston University, and IVAI in Tel Aviv. Since taking the leadership in Atlanta he increased the operations of the company from 12 to 32 performances a season, while stabilizing the financials. Some of his noted achievements include launching the successful Discoveries series, a program that presents new contemporary works and rarely done operas in alternative venues, creating the first young artist program in the company's history, and doubling the company's annual fundraising. His work at The Atlanta Opera earned the company an international reputation and numerous awards and prizes. These include the nomination of The Atlanta Opera for the 2016 International Opera Awards in London and the selection of the acclaimed Discoveries series as Atlanta Best 2015 by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and *Silent Night* for Atlanta Best of 2016.



ARTHUR FAGEN CARL & SALLY GABLE MUSIC DIRECTOR

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *LA TRAVIATA*, 2005

Arthur Fagen is a regular guest of the world's leading opera houses, concert halls, and music festivals, including, most notably, the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Staatsoper Berlin, Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Opera Berlin, and Vienna Staatsoper. In North America, he has been a frequent guest of the New York City Opera, Portland Opera, Chautauqua, and New Orleans Opera, among others. Notable orchestras he has conducted include the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra; the Czech Philharmonic; RAI Orchestras of Turin, Naples, Milan, Rome; and Israel Symphony Orchestra. Maestro Fagen served as music director of the Dortmund Philharmonic Orchestra and Opera, principal conductor in Kassel and Brunswick, chief conductor of the Flanders Opera in Antwerp and Ghent, and was music director of the Queens Symphony Orchestra. He has made a number of recordings for Naxos and BMG. Born in New York, maestro Fagen began his conducting studies with Laszlo Halasz and served as assistant to Christoph von Dohnanyi at Frankfurt Opera and James Levine at the Metropolitan Opera. Maestro Fagen is professor of music in instrumental conducting at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.



JACOB A. CLIMER SCENIC & COSTUME DESIGNER

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERAGLIO*, 2016

Jacob A. Climer is a costume and scenic designer for theater and opera. Originally from Dallas, he studied costume and scenic design and received a B.F.A. from the University of Evansville and an M.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon University. Jacob's work has been seen at New York Theatre Workshop, ERS, Primary Stages, the Public Theater, Dallas Theatre Center, Barrington Stage Company, and numerous other stages. He's designed costumes for *Fondly*, *Colette Richland* (NYTW), *Informed Consent* (Primary Stages), ERS' *The Sound and the Fury*, and *Arguendo* (Public Theater), *Social Security* (Bushwick Starr), and *Les Miserables* (Dallas Theatre Center). Jacob has designed scenery and costumes for *The Abduction From the Seraglio* (Des Moines Metro Opera), *Rinaldo* (Portland Opera), and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Curtis Institute of Music). Proud member of United Scenic Artists 829. Jacob lives in Brooklyn.

CAST & CREATIVE

WHO'S WHO?



AMITH CHANDRASHAKER LIGHTING DESIGNER
ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *LA BOHÉME*, 2015

Selected theater credits include *Twelfth Night* (The Public), *Her Requiem* (LCT3), *Fidelis* (The Public), *Ping Pong* (The Public), *The Convent of Pleasure* (Cherry Lane), *Ike at Night* (UTR/The Public), *Quiet Comfort* (Hoi Polloi), *Take Care* (The Flea), *Platonov* (The Kitchen/Jay Scheib), *The Hatmaker's Wife* (Playwrights Realm), *Book of Disquiet* (Peak Performances), *Ghosts* (Theatreworks), *Stoop Stories* (Weston Playhouse), *Carnival Kids* (Lesser America), *The Woodsman* (Oberon Ensemble), *The Drawer Boy* (Soho Playhouse), *Baal* (Hoi Polloi). Opera: *Scarlet Letter* (Opera Colorado), *Cato in Utica* (Opera Lafayette), *L'Elisir D'Amour* (The Curtis Institute). Dance: Premieres with Sidra Bell, Alexander Ekman, Aszure Barton, Kate Weare, Benoit Swan-Pouffer, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Rennie Harris Puremovement, The National Dance Company of Wales, Aalto Ballet Theatre Essen Germany, and the Royal New Zealand Ballet.



S. KATY TUCKER PROJECTION DESIGNER
ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERAGLIO*, 2016

S. Katy Tucker is a video and projection designer based in Brooklyn. Her work in theater and opera has been seen around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Sydney Opera House, San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, Carnegie Hall, the New York City Ballet, the Kennedy Center, BAM, and The Park Avenue Armory. She has collaborated with composers and musicians like Paul McCartney, John Zorn, Jeffrey Ziegler, and Paola Prestini. Her artwork has been seen at The Corcoran Gallery, Artists Space in New York City, The Dillon Gallery in New York City, The Kitchen, and National Sawdust. Recent productions: *The Ring Cycle* at the Kennedy Center; *Two Women* at San Francisco Opera and Teatro Regio Torino; *Florencia en el Amazonas* at Washington National Opera and LA Opera with Francesca Zambello; Dmitri Tcherniakov's *Prince Igor* at the Metropolitan Opera; *Ouroboros Trilogy*, a fully immersive multimedia production, at the Majestic with Michael Counts; *Tristan and Isolde* and *The Flying Dutchman* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra; *Hunds Hjärta* at Uppsala Stadsteater; and a season of multimedia collaborations with the St. Louis Symphony and conductor David Robertson. Upcoming projects: *Prince Igor* at the Dutch National Opera; *Das Rheingold* at North Carolina Opera; and *Ulysses* with The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



J. JARED JANAS WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER
ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT

Glimmerglass Festival 2016-17, Bard Summerscape 2015-17. Broadway Designs include *Bandstand*, *Indecent*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Visit*, *The Real Thing*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, *Motown*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *All About Me*, and *Next to Normal*. Recent Off-Broadway designs include *Pacific Overtures*, *Bella*, *Venus*, *Yours Unfaithfully* (Dramatic Desk Nomination), *Dead Poets Society*, and *The Liar*. Films include *Angelica and The Night Before*. TV includes "Madam Secretary," "Six by Sondheim," "Scream Queens," "Gotham," "Mozart in the Jungle," and "Inside Amy Schumer."



MEG GILLENTINE CHOREOGRAPHER

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS*, 2017

Meg Gillentine made her Broadway debut in *Cats* at the age of 19 playing Cassandra. Broadway credits include *Fosse* and *The Frogs*. She was a featured dancer in City Center Encores' production of *A Bed and a Chair: A New York Love Affair*, with music by Stephen Sondheim, performed by Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, starring Bernadette Peters, Norm Lewis, Cyrille Aimee, and Jeremy Jordan. She was in the first national tour of *The Producers* with Jason Alexander and Martin Short. She can be seen on the PBS special of *Fosse*, performing alongside Ann Reinking and Ben Vereen. Regionally, she has played Lola in *Damn Yankees* at Arena Stage (Helen Hayes Award for Best Actress in a Musical), *Cabaret* as Sally Bowles (Helen Hayes – nominated for Best Actress in a Musical), and *Mother Courage and Her Children* opposite Kathleen Turner as Yvette. Last summer, she made her opera debut at the Glimmerglass Festival in *La Gazza Ladra* (The Thieving Magpie) as the choreographer and playing the role of the Magpie. Atlanta theater credits: the Alliance Theatre world premiere of *Bull Durham* (Claudette/Reporter); *Calendar Girls* (Celia) at Georgia Ensemble Theatre; *The Producers* (Ulla) and *Damn Yankees* (Lola) at the Atlanta Lyric Theatre. She is married to operatic tenor Jay Hunter Morris.



ROLANDO SALAZAR ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR/CHORUS MASTER

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *LA TRAVIATA*, 2013

Rolando Salazar is the Assistant Conductor, Interim Chorus Master, and the Music Administrator for The Atlanta Opera. He has served as assistant conductor and pianist at the Bellingham Festival of Music, as assistant conductor at La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy, and as coach/conductor for the Harrower Opera Workshop. He serves as artistic director and conductor of the Georgia Piedmont Youth Orchestra while maintaining a guest conducting schedule, most recently in performances with the Georgia State University Orchestra, Johns Creek Symphony Orchestra, Georgia State University Opera, and the Ozark Family Opera. Mr. Salazar also keeps an active coaching and collaborative piano schedule in Atlanta, preparing numerous singers for engagements with major orchestras and opera houses all over the world. A student of Michael Palmer, he is a graduate of Georgia State University with a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting and an Artist Diploma in Orchestra and Opera.



KRISTINN SIGMUNDSSON DALAND

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT

Lauded for his portrayal of Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the Financial Times further praised Icelandic bass Kristinn Sigmundsson, "his tone dark and his dynamic range broad, he exuded raw power, crusty lust and comic bravado, all reinforced by a trace of gravitas." In the 2017-18 season, Sigmundsson will join the Edinburgh International Festival as Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*. Last season, he returned to Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie as La Roche in *Capriccio*, Staatsoper Hamburg to reprise Melchthal in *Guillaume Tell*, Teatro Regio Torino as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra as Rocco in *Fidelio*. As one of the world's most sought-after basses, Mr. Sigmundsson has sung nearly his entire repertoire with the Opéra National de Paris. His performances at the Metropolitan Opera include Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Hundig in *Die Walküre*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, and Vodnik in *Rusalka*. He regularly sings leading roles with the Staatsoper Wien, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Semperoper Dresden, where his most recent performances include Méphistophélès in *La damnation de Faust*. His discography includes commercial recordings of *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte* with Arnold Östman (Decca). With Frans Brüggen, he has recorded both Bach's *St. John Passion* and the *St. Matthew Passion* (Phillips). He has recorded Schumann's *Faustszenen* with Philippe Herreweghe (Harmonia Mundi) and *Fidelio* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Colin Davis.



JUSTIN STOLZ STEUERMANN

STUDIO ARTIST | ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS*, 2017

Praised for his “exceptionally emotional” (Ontario Arts Review) and “effortlessly powerful” voice (The Chronicle Journal), Canadian tenor Justin Stolz is establishing himself as an exciting young performer. Mr. Stolz recently made his IU Opera and Ballet Theater debut as Don José in *Carmen* and performed the role of B.F. Pinkerton in the company's production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Highlights of past seasons include Mr. Owen in Argento's *Postcard From Morocco*, Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème*, and Don Ottavio in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. A recent recipient of the first prize in The S. Livingston Mather Competition of Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Stolz began his vocal studies in his hometown of Thunder Bay, Ontario, under Mary McGhee and is a graduate of The Glenn Gould School (The Royal Conservatory of Music), where he studied under Monica Whicher. Earlier engagements in 2017 included Britten's *Serenade* at Indiana University, the tenor soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic Orchestra, and a reprisal of the role of Don José in the Brott Music Festival's production of *Carmen*.



WAYNE TIGGES THE DUTCHMAN

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT

Lauded by the Chicago Sun-Times for his “rich, dark tone and beautiful legato,” Wayne Tigges will sing Alfio in *Cavalleria rusticana* and Tonio in *I Pagliacci* with New Orleans Opera, the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, and further performances of Tonio in *I Pagliacci* with Utah Opera, Ping in *Turandot* with Tulsa Opera, and will create the role of Sgt. Aaron Marcum in the world premiere of Huang Ruo and David Henry Hwang's *An American Soldier* in a return to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Last season included performances of the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer* (Austin Opera), Owen Hart in *Dead Man Walking*, and Howie Albert in Blanchard's *Champion* (Washington National Opera), the Four Villains in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (LA Opera and Hawaii Opera Theater), and Roy Cohn in *Angels in America* (New York City Opera). Other recent operatic engagements include Méphistophélès in *Faust* (Macau Music Festival); the title role in *Falstaff* (Des Moines Metro Opera); Assur in *Semiramide* (Washington National Opera); Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd* (San Francisco Opera); Picker's Dolores Claiborne (San Francisco, world premiere); *Giulio Cesare* (Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Carmen* (Glyndebourne Festival, San Diego); *The Makropoulos Case* (Opéra National de Paris); *Les contes d' Hoffmann* (Santa Fe); *Das Rheingold* (Los Angeles); *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Colorado); *Hamlet* (Minnesota); Sam and Wesley in the world premiere of Theofanidis' *Heart of a Soldier* (San Francisco Opera).



OLIVIA VOTE MARY

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT

Lauded for her “theatrical magnetism” and her “beautiful voice that fills the hall and soars over the orchestra,” American mezzo-soprano Olivia Vote continues to make successful debuts in the United States and Europe. She received high praise for role and company debuts as Mère Marie in the *Dialogues des Carmélites* with Sarasota Opera and as Nicklausse in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* with Hawaii Opera Theater. In the 2017-18 season, she will sing Adalgisa in *Norma* for Opera Southwest, and Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with North Carolina Opera. Additionally, she will be heard in Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with Maestro Antony Walker at the Kennedy Center under the auspices of The Choral Arts Society of Washington. From 2012 to 2014, Ms. Vote was a member of the Internationales Opernstudio at Opernhaus Zürich. Highlights of her time there included Fidalma in *Il matrimonio segreto*, Philomene in Martinů's *Zweimal Alexandre*, and as a soloist in Hans Neuenfels' new production of *Wie ich Welt wurde*. In addition, she performed roles in Rinaldo, *La traviata*, *Meistersinger*, *Salome*, and *Rigoletto*, and covered roles in *Madame Butterfly*, *Alcina*, *La Straniera*, and *Falstaff*. She returned for productions of *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Fabio Luisi and *La traviata* with Marco Armiliato. Successful in competition, Ms. Vote won second prize in the Loren L. Zachary Competition, the Gerda Lissner International Competition, and the McCammon Competition of the Fort Worth Opera Guild.



MELODY MOORE SENTA

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *DON GIOVANNI*, 2012

Soprano Melody Moore has appeared on such opera stages as San Francisco Opera in the title role of *Tosca*, Susan Rescorla in *Heart of a Soldier*, Mimì in *La bohème*, and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*. For Houston Grand Opera as Julie in *Show Boat*, Marta in the American premiere of Weinberg's *The Passenger*, the title role in *Carmen*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and as Freia in *Das Rheingold*. She was seen at Seattle Opera in the title role of Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová*; English National Opera as Mimì in *La bohème*; and as Marguerite in *Faust*; New York City Opera as Rita Clayton in the New York premiere of Stephen Schwartz's *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*; and as Regine St. Laurent in Rufus Wainwright's *Prima Donna*; LA Opera as Tosca and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and in productions of *Der Zwerg* and *Der Zerbrochene Krug*; and at the Washington National Opera in the title role of Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*, as well as Freia and Ortlinda in the company's complete Ring Cycle. In the 2017-18 season, Moore makes four major role debuts: Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* at Washington National Opera; the title role in *Salome* at Florida Grand Opera; Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* at Hawaii Opera Theater; and Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* with the NDR Radiophilharmonie (to be recorded and released on the Pentatone label). She will also reprise her acclaimed portrayal of Tosca at both Opéra de Montreal and Teatro Municipal de Santiago de Chile.



JAY HUNTER MORRIS ERIK

ATLANTA OPERA DEBUT: *PAGLIACCI*, 2006

Opera singer, Grammy-Winner and Author, Jay Hunter Morris came into the National spotlight when he created the role of Tony in Terrence McNally's celebrated play *Master Class*, on Broadway in 1995. Career highlights include performances in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Seattle, Santiago, Santa Fe, San Diego, Calgary, Toronto, Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Hawaii, Atlanta, Paris, Monte Carlo, Budapest, Tokyo, Nice, Strasbourg, Frankfurt, Vienna, and Beijing. He debuted the role of Siegfried with the San Francisco Opera in 2011, and perhaps most famously, at the Metropolitan Opera in their new production by Robert LePage in 2011-12. The production was broadcast live to cinemas worldwide, and in 2013 won a Grammy for Best Opera Recording. He sang the role in Budapest at the Wagner Days Festival, and again in 2016 with Houston Grand Opera. Other recent successes include his first Tristan in *Valencia*, under the baton of Zubin Mehta, and Schoenberg's *Guerre-Lieder* at the Vienna Konzerthaus with Kent Nagano. Mr. Morris has most recently been seen on PBS in the role of Captain Ahab in Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick*, from the San Francisco Opera. A contemporary opera veteran of great renown, Mr. Morris has been heard in world premiere productions including *Doctor Atomic* (Adams), *The Fly* (Shore), *Grendel* (Goldenthal), *Dead Man Walking* (Heggie), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Previn), *A Christmas Carol* (Bell), and he created the role of Teague in a new opera: *Cold Mountain* (Higdon), which premiered in Santa Fe in 2015. This year, he made his Carnegie Hall debut in John Adams' *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*. In 2013, his book, "Diary of a Redneck Opera Zinger," was published by Opera Lively.

THE ATLANTA OPERA CHORUS

CHORUS MASTER

Rolando Salazar

CHORUS MEMBERS

SOPRANO

Hila Brod
Kate Doriot
Stefani Dunn
Christina Howell
Kelsey Onwuzuruigbo
Reina Powell
Natalie Rogers
Rebecca Shipley
Jeanette Simpson
Tiffany Uzoije

ALTO

Lynnette Anderson
Elizebeth Barnes
Melanie Burbules
Valerie Hamm
Jessica Lane
Allison Nance
Eva Sullivan
Amber Tittle
Laurie Tossing
Lenna Turner

TENOR

Sidnei Alferes
Charles Baugh*
Perry Benson, III
Jose Caballero*
Pedro Carreras
Jonathan Chavez*
Tyler Cook
Kirby Eicholtz
William Green*
John Harr
M. Grant Jones
Sungbae Kim*
Eric Mask
William McChriston*
Cody Russell
Brian Strickland
Tom Suber
Billy Valentine
Daniel Weisman*
Brendan Callahan-Fitzgerald*

BASS

Jacob Augsten
Rob Banks
Alex Bedenbaugh
Cleve Bosher*
Christopher S. Connolly
C. Agustus Godbee
Antoine Griggs
Allen Michael Jones
John Carl Jones*
Michael Lindsay*
Timothy Marshall
Stephen McCool
Sheldon Michael
Jahi Mims
Conrad Moore*
Jason Royal*
Ivan Segovia
Jadrian Tarver*
Benito Thompson*
Van-Arc Wright*

*member of Ghost Chorus

THE ATLANTA OPERA ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Peter Ciaschini
*The Loraine P. Williams
Orchestra Concertmaster
Chair*

Lisa Morrison
*Acting Assistant
Concertmaster*

Fia Durrett
Principal Second

Adelaide Federici
Assistant Principal Second

Edward Eanes
Felix Farrar
Martha Gardner
Robert Givens
Patti Gouvas
Tami Hughes
Sheela Iyengar
Alison James
Kathryn Koch
Shawn Pagliarini
Virginia Respress
Patrick Ryan
Angele Sherwood-Lawless
Qiao Solomon
Elonia Varfi
Rafael Veytsblum
Andrzej Zabinski

VIOLA

William Johnston
Principal

Elizabeth Derderian-Wood
Assistant Principal

Josiah Coe
Leigh Dixon
Joli Wu
Meghan Yost

CELLO

Charae Krueger
Principal

Hilary Glen
Assistant Principal

David Hancock
Roy Harran
Mary Kenney
Cynthia Sulko

BASS

Lyn DeRamus
Principal

Maurice Belle
Adam Bernstein
Emory Clements
Christina Ottaviano

FLUTE

Jim Zellers
Principal

Erica Pirtle
Kelly Bryant
Piccolo

OBOE

Diana Dunn
Principal

Martha Kleiner
Oboe/English Horn

CLARINET

David Odom
Principal

John Warren

BASSOON

Debra Grove
Acting Principal

John Grove

HORN

David Bradley
Principal

Jason Eklund
Ed Ferguson
Richard Williams
Eric Hawkins
Anna Dodd

TRUMPET

Yvonne Toll
Principal

Clayton Chastain

TROMBONE

Mark McConnell
Principal

Edmon Nicholson
Richard Brady
Bass Trombone

TUBA

Donald Strand
Principal

TIMPANI

John Lawless
Principal

PERCUSSION

Michael Cebulski
Principal

Jeff Kershner

HARP

Susan Brady
Principal

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Mark McConnell

Richard Brady has played bass trombone in the Atlanta Opera Orchestra for 32 years, and principal trombone for two seasons.

THE ATLANTA OPERA: What is your favorite Atlanta Opera production you've played?

RICHARD BRADY: Ariadne auf Naxos by Strauss

AO: What do you do when you're not playing or practicing the trombone?

RB: This has changed as I have gotten older. Before: martial arts, flying (I am a licensed pilot), cave diving, rock climbing. Now: hiking, camping, astronomy, ham radio.

AO: Where did you grow up and how did you get into music?

RB: I am a native Atlantan. In the fourth grade I started playing with a Southwest Atlanta elementary band program called the West End Elementary Band. An amazing number of top brass and wind players came out of the program.

AO: Any advice for young musicians?

RB: Try to be professional about everything; practice until you can't get it wrong; practice until you are tired and add 10 minutes; get private instruction; listen to

everything you can get your hands on.

AO: What genres of music and/or artists do you like?

RB: Oddly enough, I like pretty much everything. My favorites: Blood, Sweat & Tears; the Beatles; Earth, Wind & Fire; Johnny Cash; The Dear Hunter; Leah Partridge (she puts her whole being into her music).

AO: If you had to play any other instrument in the orchestra, what would it be?

RB: Cello. Other than the trombone, it is the closest to the human voice.

AO: What are your favorite musical moments in *The Flying Dutchman*, and what should audiences listen for in this opera?

RB: This is a stunning work. This will be the third production of this work I have performed in (including one production in Italy). My favorite moment is probably Act III, Scene 8 with the chorus. Always listen for the low brass!

AO: Overrated or underrated: "76 Trombones" from *The Music Man*.

RB: When performing in the musical — underrated. When performing out of context — overrated!



The Atlanta Opera Orchestra. (photo: Jeff Roffman)

BACKGROUND

ABOUT LEITMOTIF

LEITMOTIF AND THE COMPOSERS WHO LOVE THEM

Long before the signature entrances of Indiana Jones, Jaws, and Darth Vader, there was music that reminded audiences of a particular character, emotion, or theme. Short, recurring motifs (from the French “motive” and translating as “short theme”) in orchestral music began appearing in the 1700’s, although not in any extensive or systematic way. Although these musical statements were usually short melodies, they could be particular chord progressions or as simple as particular repeated rhythms. Composers Carl Maria von Weber and Beethoven, among others, used this technique (think of the opening movement in Beethoven’s fifth symphony – Beethoven’s biographer suggested that the motif represents “fate knocking at the door.”)

The idea of a musical statement representing a particular feeling or theme was also used by Hector Berlioz in his *Symphonie Fantastique*, wherein the recurring motif represents the love of the central characters, even though there are no singers on stage representing those lovers. Berlioz called this idea the *idée fixe*.

While this idea had been around for a number of years before Richard Wagner arrived on the scene, it is he who is most often associated with the term leitmotif (loosely translated meaning “leading motif”). He used leitmotif extensively in his music, especially his operas and it is from this usage that they have become so intrinsically linked to his name. He used them to represent characters, ideas, thoughts and feelings in his work, and in his longest work, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (or the Ring Cycle), there are dozens of motifs!

Since Wagner, many other composers have used this technique in their works: Sergei Prokofiev uses it in *Peter and the Wolf*, Verdi gave his title character one in *Aida*, and stirred audiences with the music threatening the entrance of the “bad guy” Scarpia in *Tosca*. Today, leitmotifs appear constantly in movies and plays, and the term is even used in literary studies!

While Wagner never named his leitmotifs, one of his students went to the trouble of identifying in some of his works all the motifs and naming each one after its idea or them, such as the “fate motif.” There are several important leitmotifs in *The Flying Dutchman*, and we have reproduced some of them below.

DUTCHMAN



WANDERER



REDEMPTION / SENTA'S THEME



FATE



BACKGROUND

Wagner's use of leitmotifs are in the same vein as popular musical themes in plays and movies today. Indiana Jones and Darth Vader always get their own refrain played when they are doing something particularly "them" – For example when "Indy" is escaping from an impossible situation, or whenever Vader marches in. In these cases, the music reminds the audience about something important in the story (in the case of Vader's entry it usually means bad news for whoever is in the room). These are easily identifiable examples of leitmotif, and clearly demonstrate how it is not just the title track from the soundtrack that makes the theme, but something musical that speaks to the character that makes this a leitmotif.

ACTIVITY

Play some popular theme songs ("Jaws", "Darth Vader's March," "Indiana Jones" etc.) and discuss with students what they're hearing and why it reminds them of the character or idea. For music students,

this is an opportunity to discuss how, in Western music, ascending chord progressions can represent inspiration or triumph (among other feelings) and how descending progressions and minor keys remind us of sadness or can give us a sense of foreboding (Scarpia's theme from *Tosca* is a great example of this). Of course, in non-Western cultures and musical traditions, these musical "clues" may signify something very different.

Discuss with students which aspects of each theme speak to them, and why (or why not) they think the music works as part of the character, idea, or story it is meant to represent.

Then pick your own! This can be done as a class, or individuals, depending on the level of students. Identify a theme, character, idea, or person from, history, popular culture, or another class unit, and either compose a theme on instruments available in the classroom, or choose one from other music studied. Discuss what elements are important to represent, and how each musical choice answers to those needs.



A set rendering *The Dutchman* and Senta singing the Love Duet. (rendering: Jacob A. Climer)

Opera is a dramatic story told through song. Considered by many to be the most complete art form, it combines all of the elements of art, words, music, drama and dance. The earliest Italian operas were called by several names, such as “favola in musica” (fable in music) and “drama per musica” (drama by means of music). This last title is very close to the dictionary definition, and is the correct basis for any discussion about opera.

The unique thing about opera is the use of music to convey an entire story/plot. This is based on the feeling that music can communicate people’s reactions and emotions better than words (read or spoken) or pictures. Opera takes any type of dramatic story and makes it more exciting and more believable with the help of music. Many famous stories have been made into operas, including *Cinderella*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The concept of opera was developing many years before the first opera was written. Its beginning can be traced to the ancient Greeks. They fused poetry and music, creating plays that incorporate song, spoken language and dance, accompanied by string or wind instruments.

In the 1100s the early Christian church set religious stories to music, a style known as liturgical drama. The first true opera, *Daphne* (1597), was composed by Jacopo Peri. It told the story of a Greek myth.

The first great composer of opera was Claudio Monteverdi. Some of his operas are still performed today.

German composer Christoph Gluck’s most famous opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), marked a shift in importance from the performers to the drama. It also reduced the amount of recitative and laid the foundations for the progression of the art form.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was another prolific composer during this time and many of his operas like *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro* - 1786) and *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute* - 1791) are still frequently performed around the world.



The Atlanta Opera’s 2007 mainstage production of *Hansel and Gretel* at The Cobb Energy Centre featured elaborate puppets designed in part by Jim Henson Studios. (photo: Tim Wilkerson)



OPERA AROUND THE WORLD

Italy was the first country where opera became popular.

It was the homeland of Jacopo Peri and Claudio Monteverdi. In time this exciting form of entertainment spread to the rest of Europe. France and Germany joined Italy as the principal opera producers. Eventually opera came to reflect the stories and musical styles of each of these countries.

The Italians have always been famous for their love of singing, and so in Italian opera there has always been great emphasis placed on the singer and the beautiful sounds of the human voice. It wasn't until the late 19th century and early 20th century with the later works of Verdi and the operas of Puccini that a balance was achieved between the role of the orchestra and that of the singer. These two forces were combined to give a more effective presentation of the story.

The French have favored the pictorial side of drama, and this has led to a continuing emphasis on the visual spectacle, especially with dancing. For example, the Paris opera audience in the 19th century would not accept a work for performance if it did not contain a major ballet. Verdi, an Italian composer, had to add ballets to all of his works to get them performed in Paris.

The Germans have always sought to extract from both the Italian and French traditions, and go beyond both in an attempt to present more than just a story. In fact, one of the greatest German opera composers, Richard Wagner, chose legends or myths for most of his opera plots so that he could communicate ideas as well as just a story.

DIFFERENT STYLES OF OPERA

OPERA SERIA Serious opera. These stories are often tragic, and typically involve heroes and kings or ancient myths and gods. *Julius Caesar* (1724) by George Frideric Handel is a classic example of opera seria.

OPERA BUFFA Comic opera, typically sung in Italian. The jokesters in these operas are always the working class, such as maids, peasants, or servants, who keep busy getting the best of their employers. *The Italian Girl in Algiers* (1813) by Rossini is an amusing example of opera buffa.

SINGSPIEL, or "Sing Play," evolved in German speaking countries out of the comic opera tradition. It includes elements of comic opera, spoken dialogue interjected among the sung phrases, and often, an exotic or fanciful theme. Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (1791) is an example of this style.

BEL CANTO This Italian phrase means "beautiful singing". These operas grew from a style of singing emphasizing long phrases, breath control and flexibility in singing both loudly and softly. *The Barber of Seville* (1816) by Gioachino Rossini is a popular example of bel canto.

GRAND OPERA Spectacular opera. It is performed with elaborate sets and costumes. Many people are needed to make it happen. Grand opera involves royalty, heroism, an elaborate ballet scene, and can often last for several hours. Charles Gounod's *Faust* (1869 version) is an example of grand opera.

MUSIC DRAMA A style of opera that is created by a single artist who writes both the text and the music to advance the drama. This style fuses many art forms, and makes each one as important as the others. *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyries*) (1870) and other operas by Richard Wagner defined this style.



The Atlanta Opera's 2014 mainstage production of *The Barber of Seville* at The Cobb Energy Centre. (photo: Ken Howard)

HISTORY OF OPERA IN ATLANTA

Opera has been an integral part of Atlanta's cultural fabric since October 1866 when the Ghioni and Sussini Grand Italian Opera Company presented three operas in the city. The performances were well received and soon after, small touring companies began to bring more full-length operas to Atlanta.

Atlantans became avid fans of opera and in 1910 The Metropolitan Opera of New York toured Atlanta for the first time. Once a year, for a full week during spring, people flocked to the city to see the Met's wonderful performances and enjoy the many parties that were hosted throughout the city.

The opera was the place to be seen, with people crowding the lobbies and balconies of the various performance venues. The Met tour returned to Atlanta every spring until 1986, with the exception of 1931-1939 due to financial complications of the Great Depression.



Leontyne Price was one of the first African American featured singers with The Metropolitan Opera Company. This photo appeared in the program for the 1964 tour of *Don Giovanni*, in which she sang the role of Donna Anna. (photo: The Metropolitan Opera Company, *Carmen*, 1964 touring season program book / The Atlanta Opera archives)



The Metropolitan Opera Company's 1968 production of *Tosca* with Gabriella Tucci as Tosca, singing "Vissi d'arte." (photo: The Metropolitan Opera Company, *Tosca*, 1968 touring season program book / The Atlanta Opera archives)

With the success and popularity of the Met's annual tour came a desire for Atlanta to have its own opera company. Soon, several smaller, local opera companies began to operate in the area. In 1980, The Atlanta Civic Opera Association was created through the merging of two smaller companies, The Atlanta Lyric Opera and the Georgia Opera. In 1987 the company changed its name to The Atlanta Opera, Inc. Since its early beginnings, the company has grown and changed tremendously.

The Atlanta Opera was the first resident company in the new Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre in the fall of 2007. The Atlanta Opera season runs similarly to an academic calendar, opening in the fall and closing in the spring. It presents mainstage productions at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, with a minimum of four performances each. The Discoveries series offers two additional productions at smaller venues, often of special productions or contemporary works best staged in smaller, more intimate settings.

IMPORTANT JOBS

WHO KEEPS THE OPERA RUNNING?

In addition to the singers and musicians you see on stage and in the orchestra pit, there are many other folks who help bring the show to life!

MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR is responsible for the musical excellence of an opera. They ensure the singers understand the music, sing in the appropriate style, and work with the orchestra to make sure everyone is playing correctly together.

STAGE DIRECTOR is responsible for the action on the stage. They work with the designers to create the concept for the production. He or she helps the singers understand why their characters would act in certain ways, and how the characters communicate with each other.

CHOREOGRAPHER creates movement or dancing for operas. They study dance, movement and do research on different historical periods.

PRODUCTION MANAGER helps make the director's and designers' vision a reality by working with the shops that build the scenery and costumes.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR makes sure that the lighting, scenery, costumes and props are coordinated and that the crews who handle those elements know what needs to be done during the performance.

STAGE MANAGER manages the rehearsal schedule and takes detailed notes about the stage directions, lighting cues and scenery changes. During the performance, they are backstage calling all the technical cues and making sure the show runs smoothly.

SET DESIGNER creates the concept for the physical environment of the opera and works with the director to create the scenery that helps tell the story. They research history, color, space, architecture, and furniture.

LIGHTING DESIGNER helps create the mood of each scene with light, shadow, and color. They also study the music and work with the set designer and the director to decide how light will be used to help tell the story.

COSTUME DESIGNER creates the look of the characters with clothing. They choose the fabrics and supervise the construction of the costumes, or selection of pre-made costumes.



The Stage Manager calls cues by watching monitors of a performance of *The Abduction from the Seraglio* in 2016. (photo: Jeff Roffman)

WIG & MAKE-UP DESIGNER creates the hair and make-up styling for the show in tandem with the costumes and the production design. They are also responsible for any special effects make-up like scars, wounds or blood.

WARDROBE MANAGER makes sure all the costumes are clean and pressed and coordinates all the costume changes. Dressers help the singers put on their complicated costumes and change their costumes during the performance.

PROPERTIES (PROPS) MASTER is responsible for all the objects that the singers touch or move that are not part of their costumes. They do a lot of research to find the perfect period newspaper, set of glasses, bouquet of flowers, or book. They make artificial things look real on stage, like food or drink.

CREW & STAGEHANDS includes carpenters and electricians. They assist with the installation of the set on stage once it has been built. During the performance they are responsible for set and lighting changes.

GLOSSARY

BASIC OPERA TERMS & VOCABULARY

ACT / SCENE

Acts and scenes are ways of categorizing sections of operas. An act is a large-scale division of an opera, and each opera will typically include from two to five acts. Acts can be subdivided into scenes, which are often differentiated by a change in setting or characters.

ADAGIO

Literally “at ease,” adagio is a tempo marking that indicates a slow speed. An adagio tempo marking indicates that the performer should play in a slow and leisurely style.

ALLEGRO

Italian for “cheerful” or “joyful,” Allegro is the most common tempo marking in Western music, indicating a moderately fast to quick speed.

ARIA

A song for solo voice accompanied by orchestra.

BRAVO

Italian for “nicely done”; shouted by audience members after a performance

CADENZA

An ornamented musical elaboration played in a free style by a soloist to display his or her virtuosity.

CHORUS

A section of an opera in which a large group of singers performs together, typically with orchestral accompaniment.

CRESCENDO

A gradual raising of volume in music achieved by increasing the dynamic level. When music crescendos, the performers begin at a softer dynamic level and become incrementally louder.

DIMINUENDO

A gradual lowering of volume in music achieved by decreasing the dynamic level. During a diminuendo, the performers begin at a louder dynamic level and become incrementally softer.

DYNAMICS

A musical trait pertaining to loudness and softness. Dynamics encompass a spectrum from **pianissimo** (very soft) to **piano** (soft) to **mezzo piano** (moderately soft), all the way up to **fortissimo** (very loud). Music can shift to another dynamic level either suddenly or gradually, through a **crescendo** or **diminuendo**.

ENSEMBLE

A musical piece for two or more soloists, accompanied by orchestra. Types of ensembles include **duets** (for two soloists), **trios** (for three soloists), and **quartets** (for four soloists).

FINALE

The last portion of an act, a finale consists of several musical sections that accompany an escalating dramatic tension. Finales frequently consist of multiple ensembles with different numbers of characters.

FORTE

Meaning “loud” or “strong” in Italian, forte is a dynamic level in music that indicates a loud volume. Adding the suffix “-issimo” to a word serves as an intensifier—since forte means “loud,” fortissimo means “very loud.”

INTERMISSION

A break between acts of an opera.

LEGATO

A type of articulation in which a melody is played with smooth connection between the notes.

LIBRETTO

The text of an opera, including all the words that are said or sung by performers.

MELODY

A succession of pitches that form an understandable unit. The melody of a piece consists of the tune that a listener can hum or sing.

OVERTURE

An instrumental piece that occurs before the first act as an introduction to an opera.

PIANO

Abbreviated p in a musical score, piano indicates a soft dynamic level.

RECITATIVE

Speech-like singing in-between musical numbers that advances the plot.

RHYTHM

Refers to the way music unfolds over time; it is a series of durations in a range from long to short. Along with pitch, it is a basic and indispensable parameter of music.

SCORE

The complete musical notation for a piece, the score includes notated lines for all of the different instrumental and vocal parts that unite to constitute a musical composition.

TEMPO

Literally “time” in Italian, tempo refers to the speed of a piece of music.

TIMBRE

Pronounced TAM-bruh, a French word that means “sound color.” It refers to the complex combination of characteristics that give each instrument or voice its unique sound.

VOCABULARY

ACTIVITY

Write the letter of the correct match next to each problem.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ CHORUS | a. A break between acts of an opera. |
| 2. _____ SCENES | b. A type of articulation in which a melody is played with smooth connection between the notes. |
| 3. _____ DYNAMICS | c. The last portion of an act. |
| 4. _____ ADAGIO | d. Refers to the speed of a piece of music. |
| 5. _____ SCORE | e. A way to categorize the sections of operas. |
| 6. _____ INTERMISSION | f. A musical trait pertaining to loudness and softness. |
| 7. _____ ARIA | g. A gradual raising of volume in music achieved by increasing the dynamic level. |
| 8. _____ TIMBRE | h. A song for solo voice accompanied by orchestra. |
| 9. _____ TEMPO | i. A musical piece for two or more soloists, accompanied by orchestra. |
| 10. _____ LEGATO | j. A tempo marking indicating a moderately fast to quick speed. |
| 11. _____ OVERTURE | k. Italian for “nicely done,” shouted by audience members after a performance |
| 12. _____ ALLEGRO | l. Refers to the complex combination of characteristics that give each instrument or voice its unique sound. |
| 13. _____ LIBRETTO | m. Speechlike singing inbetween musical numbers that advances the plot. |
| 14. _____ RECITATIVE | n. The complete musical notation for a piece, |
| 15. _____ ENSEMBLE | o. The text of an opera. |
| 16. _____ BRAVO | p. Refers to the way music unfolds over time; it is a series of durations in a range from long to short. |
| 17. _____ CRESCENDO | q. An instrumental piece that occurs before the first act as an introduction to an opera. |
| 18. _____ FINALE | r. A section of an opera in which a large group of singers performs together, typically with orchestral accompaniment. |
| 19. _____ DIMINUENDO | s. A gradual lowering of volume in music achieved by decreasing the dynamic level. |
| 20. _____ RHYTHM | t. A tempo marking that indicates that the performer should play in a slow and leisurely style. |

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRAINED VOICE

Singing in Europe and America is now generally divided into two categories: classical and popular. What most people think of as operatic or classical singing developed in Europe hundreds of years ago. This style flourished during the seventeenth century, as opera became a popular form of entertainment and operatic music increased in complexity. The most recognizable characteristics of a classically trained voice are:

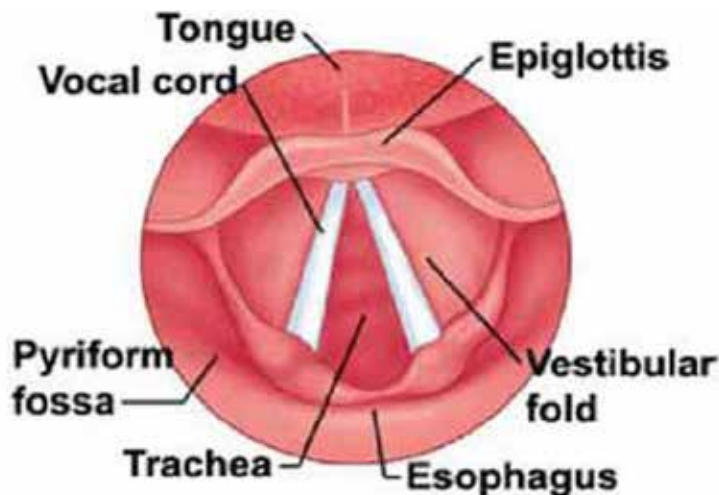
- an extensive range (the ability to sing both high and low)
- varying degrees of volume (loud and soft)
- resonance in the chest and sinus cavities (produces a full or round sound)
- an ability to project or fill a large space without amplification

TRAINING

Very few people are born with the capability to sing this way. Classical singers take voice lessons about once a week and practice every day for many years in order to develop a beautiful operatic sound. In fact, most trained voices are not mature enough to perform leading roles on a big stage until they're at least 25 years old. Compare that with the most popular singers on the radio today who could release their first albums as teenagers!

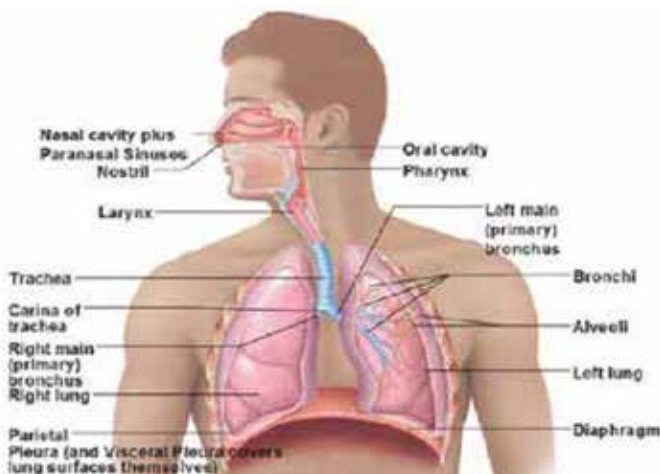
THE VOCAL CORDS

Science tells us that all sound is made by two things vibrating together. The same concept applies when we talk or sing. The sounds we make are really just the vibration of two little muscles called the vocal cords. The vocal cords are held in the larynx, which is sometimes called the voicebox or (in boys) the Adam's Apple. These two little cords of tissue vary in length but are typically between 1 and 2 inches long. When you want to say something, your brain tells your vocal cords to pull together until they're touching lightly. Then, air pushes through them, and the vocal cords begin to vibrate, opening and closing very quickly. This vibration creates a sound. The pitches you sing are dependent on the speed at which the cords vibrate. A faster vibration creates a higher pitch. The length of the cords also affects the pitch of the voice. Longer cords equal a lower voice.



BREATHING / SUPPORT

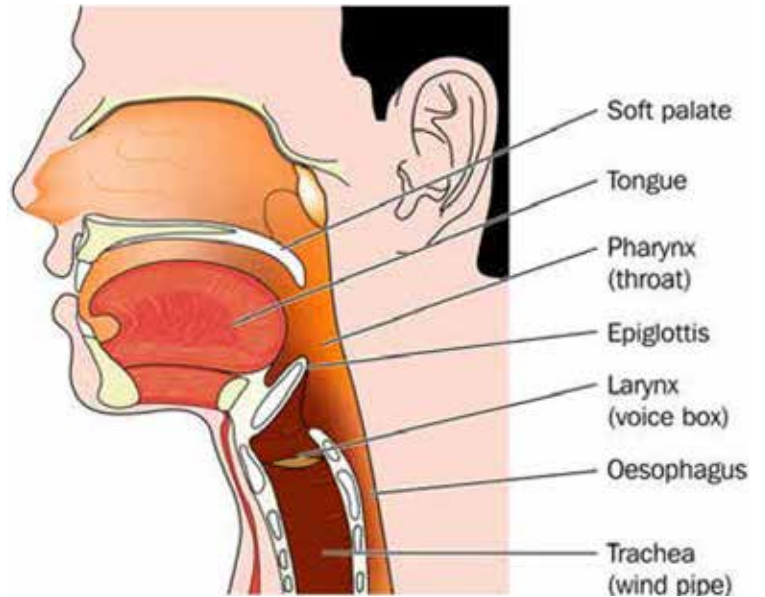
In order to sing long phrases with a lot of volume and a good tone, singers must breathe in a specific manner, making use of the entire torso area (lungs, ribs, diaphragm and viscera). As they breathe in, each part of this network does its job: the lungs fill up with air, which forces the ribs to expand and the diaphragm (a flat muscle below the lungs) to move down. As the diaphragm descends, the viscera (stomach, intestines and other organs) are forced down and out. Singers describe this feeling as fatness in the low stomach or filling an inner-tube around their waist. Expelling the air, or singing, is essentially a slow and controlled movement of those muscles. If all of the air escapes from the lungs quickly, the tone of the voice will sound breathy and will lack intensity. Successful opera singers must be able to isolate the diaphragm and ribs, controlling the rate at which they return to their original positions. This allows for a consistent stream of air that travels from the lungs, through the larynx and out of the mouth.



RESONANCE

One of the most obvious characteristics of an operatic voice is a full, resonant tone. Singers achieve this by lifting their soft palate. This is a part of the mouth that most people don't ever think about and can be difficult to isolate. Here are some simple exercises to feel where it is and hear the resonance in your voice when you lift it: Start to yawn. Feel that lifting sensation in the back of your mouth? That is the soft palate going up. With a relaxed mouth, slide your tongue along the roof of your mouth, from your teeth back toward your throat. You should feel your tongue go up, then down (that's your hard palate), then back up again. That soft, fleshy area at the very back is your soft palate. Say the word "who" like you would say it in normal conversation. Now, say "hoooo" like a hoot owl. Can you hear the difference?

Say the sentence "How do you do?" as if you were an old British woman. Lifting the soft palate is the foundation for the resonance in a singer's voice. With a lot of practice, a singer can lift his or her palate as soon as they begin to sing, without even thinking about it.



The Atlanta Opera's 2008 mainstage production of *Cinderella* at The Cobb Energy Centre featured Jennifer Larmore in the title role. (photo: Tim Wilkerson)

TYPES OF OPERATIC VOICES

If you sing in a choir at school or church, you're probably already familiar with the different kinds of voice types. We have the same kinds of voice types in opera, but there are a few differences:

SOPRANOS are the highest female voice type, with a range similar to a violin. In opera, they usually sing roles like the Heroine, Princess, Queen, or Damsel in Distress. Sopranos are usually the female lead in the opera.



MEZZO-SOPRANOS are the middle female voice type. Their sound is darker and warmer than a soprano. They often perform the roles of witches, sisters, maids, and best friends. Mezzos also play young men on occasion, aptly called "pants roles" or "trouser roles."



TENORS are the highest male voice type – they often sing roles like the hero, the prince, or the boyfriend. They can sound like a trumpet in both range and color. Tenors can be athletic and energetic as well as sensitive and emotional. They get all the good high notes and a lot of the applause!



BARITONES fit between choir tenors and basses – not as high as the tenors, but not as low as the basses. They can play both good and bad characters: sometimes they're the boyfriends or brothers – or the ringleader for some comedic shenanigans – but in serious operas they can be the bad guys.



BASSES are the lowest male voice type – they can sound like a bassoon, tuba or low trombone. In a serious opera they can represent age and wisdom (and sometimes evil geniuses), in a comic opera they can make you laugh. Sometimes they steal the show with their super low notes and provide a comforting presence with their warm rumbling tones.



Think of your favorite story, movie or television show. If that story was turned into an opera, what kind of voice types would be best for each of the characters?

You can hear different kinds of voice types in popular music too. Think about your favorite singers – do they have high voices or low voices? What do you like best about the way they sing?

(photos: Tim Wilkerson, Ken Howard, Jeff Roffman)

YOUR SENSE OF SOUND: ENERGY & EQUIPMENT

Sound is important to human beings because it helps us to communicate with each other. Your sense of sound also helps you to enjoy music like opera. Musicians use sounds to communicate thoughts or feelings. But what is sound exactly? How do we hear it?

THE ENERGY: HOW SOUND IS MADE

Sound is vibrating air. Sounds can vibrate in different patterns. These patterns are called sound waves. The different patterns change the sound we hear. Listen to traffic on a busy street. Noise like this is disorganized sound. Now listen to a piece of music. Music is sound and silence that is organized into patterns.

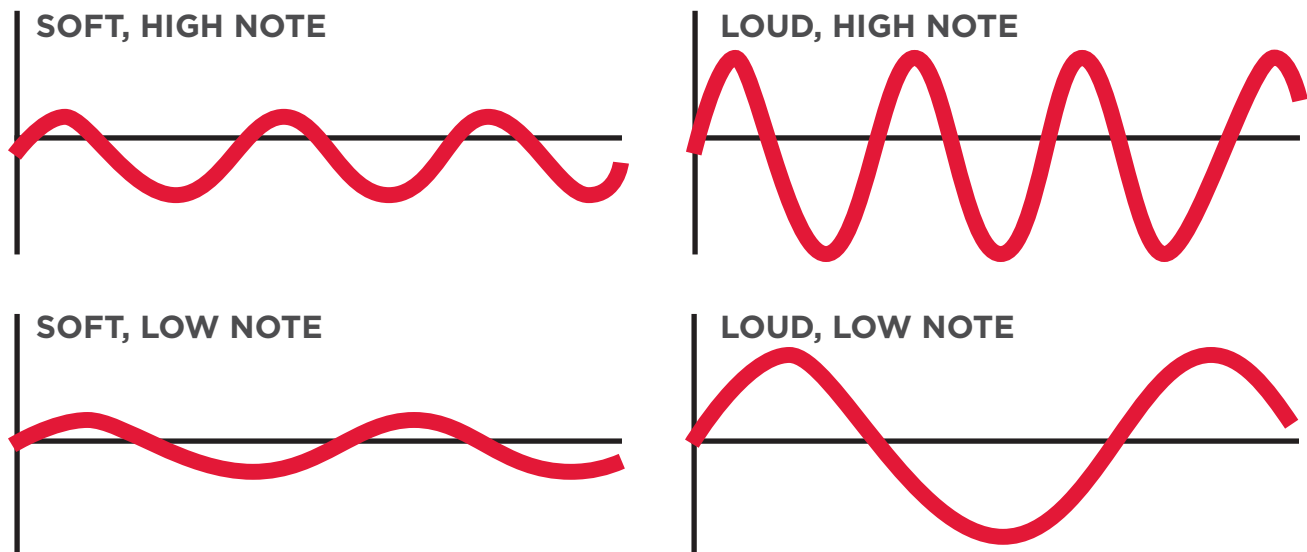
THINK ABOUT IT!

How are the sounds of traffic and music different? How does each sound make you feel? Can traffic sound like music? Can music sound like traffic?

Sound waves can vibrate many times in one second. The number of times a sound wave vibrates in one second is called its frequency. The frequency tells how high or low the sound will be. This is called pitch. High-pitched notes vibrate at a fast rate, so they have a fast frequency. Low-pitched notes have a slow frequency. In opera, the highest pitches are usually sung by women. Very low pitches are sung by men.

Just as the speed of the sound wave determines the pitch, the shape of the wave determines how loud or soft the sound will be. This is called volume.

This is what sound waves look like:

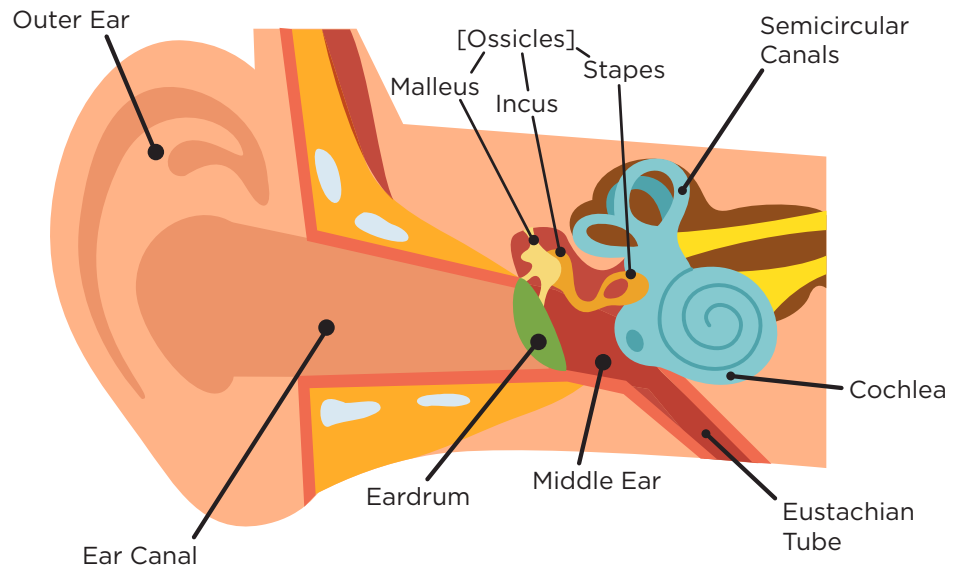


TRY THIS!

Stretch a rubber band between your thumb and forefinger on one hand. Pluck it a few times. Can you see and feel the vibrations? What happens if you pluck the rubber band harder? Softer? Change the shape of the rubber band by making it longer and thinner. What do you hear?

THE OUTER EAR

This is the only part of your ear that you can see. Your outer ear has two jobs: to collect the sound and protect the rest of the ear. Invisible sound waves travel through the air and enter the outer ear through the canal. The canal is the opening in your ear. The outer ear also makes earwax.



THE MIDDLE EAR

After sound waves travel through the canal, they reach your middle ear. The middle ear turns the sound waves into vibrations before it sends them to the inner ear. Sound passes through your eardrum and three tiny bones called ossicles. Each ossicle has a name. They are the malleus (hammer), the incus (anvil), and the stapes (stirrup). The eardrum is a thin piece of skin attached to the hammer. The hammer is attached to the anvil and the anvil is attached to the stirrup. When these three tiny bones vibrate, sound is passed on to the inner ear.

DID YOU KNOW? Earwax (the yellowish stuff that forms in your ears) is your friend! It protects the rest of the parts of your ear from getting dirt in them.

THE INNER EAR

Once vibrations enter your inner ear, they travel to the cochlea. The cochlea is a small, curled tube. It is shaped like a snail's shell. It is filled with liquid and lined with millions of tiny hairs. Vibrations cause the liquid and the hairs to move. Then the hairs change the sound into nerve signals for your brain. The brain interprets the nerve signals and tells you what sound you are hearing.

DID YOU KNOW? The ossicles are the three smallest bones in your body. The stapes is the tiniest of all!

THE BALANCING ACT

Your ears do more than just hear... they also help keep you standing upright! Three small loops are located directly above the cochlea. The loops are called the semi-circular canals. They help us maintain our balance. The semi-circular canals tell your brain the position of your head – is it looking up? Turned to the left? Your brain determines where your head is and then keeps the rest of your body in line.

Try this! Fill a cup halfway with water. Move the cup around a bit, then stop. Notice how the water keeps swishing around even after the cup is still. Sometimes this happens in your semi-circular canals when you spin around very fast. The fluid that continues to move around in your ear is what makes you feel dizzy!

REVIEW

WRITING ABOUT WHAT WE SEE & HEAR

Reviews of performances are important to every opera company. They help the company know how the performance was enjoyed in the outside world, and get other people excited about coming to see the show!

You are the opera critic. Think about the performance you just saw of *The Magic Flute* and write your thoughts like you might see in the newspaper or an online review. Remember that a critic reports both the positive and negative features of a production. You might want to focus on one part of the opera that you particularly liked or disliked. Keep in mind that reviews express the opinions of the person who writes the review and different people will often have different ideas about the same performance! Below are some tips to get you started.

To write your own review, you can focus on two different elements – what you **saw** and what you **heard**.

FACTS & OPINIONS

A review often combines two things – facts and feelings. It is a piece of straight reporting in which the reviewer tells the reader what he or she saw (facts), and an opinion piece in which the reviewer tells the reader what they liked or didn't like about those elements (opinions). Here is an example of a reviewer reporting what they saw:

“The town plaza is suggested by Paul Steinberg’s dizzyingly colorful set, with a mosaic floor and walls and piñatas hanging from above.”

For the first part of your review, briefly describe what you saw on stage – report what the sets, costumes and lights looked like. These are the facts about the show.

Next, give your opinion about whether you liked these choices. Did they help tell the story effectively?

THE ART OF THE ADJECTIVE

Critics need to have a great vocabulary of descriptive words when they write about what they hear so that the people reading their reviews can imagine what it was like to be there. People use lots of different adjectives to describe the voices of opera singers. Here’s a review that’s chock-full of great adjectives:

“The **light, smoky** baritone of George Gagnidze only hints at Rigoletto’s outsize emotions, and the **sweet, pure** soprano of Lisette Oropesa keeps Gilda **sweet** but **inert**. The **handsome, hyperactive** tenor Vittorio Grigolo has two registers, bellowing and crooning, and the conductor, Marco Armiliato, has his hands full trying to keep up with Mr. Grigolo’s **wayward** tempos.”

Sometimes it is very hard to describe the way music makes us feel. While there are definitely objective facts we can evaluate when we listen to music (qualities like loud or soft, fast or slow) most of the time we listen subjectively. This means that every opinion is valid – you don’t have to know anything about opera to be moved by someone’s singing or a beautiful instrumental solo.

Write a few sentences about the character you liked best and why. How did the music help tell you who the character was? Think of five adjectives to describe the way that person’s voice sounded to you. How did it make you feel to listen to them?

SUM IT ALL UP

In your opinion, what did you like best about the production? What did you think could use some improvement? Would you recommend that other people come see this opera?

Share your critique with us! The Atlanta Opera wants to know what you thought of our performance. If you would like to share your review with us, please send it on!

The Atlanta Opera Education Department, 1575 Northside Dr., NW, Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30318 or education@atlantaopera.org

SUPPORT

SPECIAL THANKS

The Atlanta Opera would like to thank the following for their generous support of our educational and community engagement programs.



Support also provided by:

**Molly Blank Fund of
The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation
Bright Wings Foundation
George M. Brown Trust Fund
Mary Brown Fund of Atlanta
Camp-Younts Foundation
City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs
Connolly Family Foundation
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Gas South**

**Georgia Council for the Arts
The Goizueta Foundation
Kiwanis Foundation of Atlanta
Sara Giles Moore Foundation
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Wells Fargo
Frances Wood Wilson Foundation
The Zeist Foundation**

Special Thanks:

**The Atlanta Opera Board of Directors
The Atlanta Opera Education Committee
John & Rosemary Brown
Mr. William E. Pennington
Triska Drake & G. Kimborough Taylor
Mr. Allen W. Yee**

Major support for The Atlanta Opera is provided by the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs. This program is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly; GCA also receives support from its partner agency - the National Endowment for the Arts.