

# THE MAGIC FLUTE



# THE MAGIC FLUTE

**FIRST PERFORMANCE**

Vienna, Theater auf der Wieden  
September 30, 1791

**MUSIC BY**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**LIBRETTO BY**

Emanuel Schikaneder

**ADAPTED IN ENGLISH BY**

Brenna Corner

**MUSIC DIRECTORS**

Rolando Salazar & Valerie Pool

**PRODUCTION DIRECTOR**

Brenna Corner

**SCENIC DESIGNER**

Christopher S. Dills

**COSTUME DESIGNER**

Joanna Schmink

**PIANIST & MUSIC PREPARATION**

Valerie Pool

**TOUR & STAGE MANAGER**

Emily Copeland

**PUPPETRY CONSULTANT**

Jon Ludwig

**PUPPET DESIGNS**

Sarastro, Queen of the Night, and Dragon  
designed by Jason Hines, Center for Puppetry Arts  
Papageno's Bird Puppets designed by Lisa Sturz,  
Red Herring Puppets

**TAMINO**

Justin Stolz, tenor

**PAPAGENO**

Christopher Dunham, baritone

**PAMINA**

Bryn Holdsworth, soprano

**THE QUEEN OF THE NIGHT**

Jessica Dennison, soprano

**SARASTRO**

Allen Michael Jones, bass

**PAPAGENA**

Gina Perregrino, mezzo-soprano

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Scott Hazleton

**DIRECTOR OF MARKETING**

Holly Hanchey

**AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT  
& EDUCATION MANAGER**

Jessica Kiger

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# THE MAGIC FLUTE

<b>WELCOME</b> .....	4
<b>EDUCATION</b> Georgia Performance / Excellence Standards .....	5
<b>PRE-PERFORMANCE</b> Activities Preparing Students for the Opera .....	6
<b>SYNOPSIS</b> What's It About? Who's Who? .....	7
<b>WHO'S WHO?</b> Meet the Cast .....	8
<b>A NOTE FROM</b> Brenna Corner - Translator & Director .....	11
<b>BACKGROUND</b> About The Magic Flute .....	12
<b>VOCABULARY</b> from The Magic Flute .....	14
<b>ACTIVITY</b> Vocabulary Crossword .....	15
<b>COMPOSER</b> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart .....	16
<b>LIBRETTIST</b> Emanuel Schikaneder .....	17
<b>TIMELINE</b> The World in Mozart's Time .....	18
<b>TIMELINE</b> Activities .....	21
<b>OPERA 101</b> The Basics .....	22
<b>OPERA 101</b> Different Styles of Opera .....	23
<b>OPERA 101</b> History of Opera in Atlanta .....	24
<b>IMPORTANT JOBS</b> Who Keeps The Opera Running .....	25
<b>GLOSSARY</b> Basic Opera Terms & Vocabulary .....	26
<b>VOCABULARY</b> Activity .....	27
<b>SCIENCE</b> Operatic Voices .....	28
<b>SCIENCE</b> Types of Operatic Voices .....	30
<b>SCIENCE</b> The Science of Sound .....	31
<b>REVIEW</b> Writing About What We See & Hear .....	33
<b>THEATER</b> Activity .....	34
<b>COSTUME DESIGN</b> Activity .....	35
<b>MATH</b> Elementary & Middle School Level Activity .....	37
<b>SPECIAL THANKS</b> .....	38



Thank you for inviting The Atlanta Opera into your school to perform for your students!

The Atlanta Opera Studio Tour was founded in 1980 in an effort to teach students throughout the state of Georgia about opera through live performances and workshops. Thousands of students have been introduced to the artform through the Atlanta Opera Studio touring production. It is our intention for students to gain introductory knowledge about opera through the performance experience and accompanying educational materials.

This study guide has been developed to help you and your students explore *The Magic Flute*, as well as to familiarize students with the world of opera (vocabulary, history, etc.) The guide approaches these subjects through a wide range of disciplines, including language arts, reading, math, science, problem-solving, and social studies. Our goal is to provide you with an innovative, multidisciplinary approach to teaching required skills and curriculum, including Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

In using this guide, we hope you will feel free to adapt pages or activities to best meet the needs of your students. A simple activity may be a perfect launching pad for a higher-level lesson, and a complex lesson may contain key points onto which younger students can latch. Please make this guide your own!

What you can expect from the Atlanta Opera's performance of *The Magic Flute*:

- We will be performing a 55-minute opera in English for your students.
- Our show requires attentive listening from the audience.
- The opera may take place in your school gymnasium or cafeteria rather than an auditorium, so students may be seated on the floor.
- You and your students will be invited to ask questions at the end of the performance.

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  
1575 Northside Drive  
Suite 350  
Atlanta, GA 30318

404-881-8801  
[education@atlantaopera.org](mailto:education@atlantaopera.org)



Students prepare to watch an Atlanta Opera Studio Tour performance of *The Pirates of Penzance*. (photo: Rebecca Danis)

Lessons included in the Opera Guide are designed to correlate with Georgia Performance Standards in English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Fine Arts. Specific standards addressed are listed below with each corresponding activity or lesson.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**Reading:** ELAG (K-5)(6-8) RL, ELAG (K-5)(6-8) RI, ELAG (K-5) RF, ELAG (K-5)(6-8) SL

Start with the Story.....	6
Cast of Characters / Synopsis.....	7
Background on <i>The Magic Flute</i> .....	12
Mozart & Freemasonry .....	13
Meet the Cast .....	8
Meet the Composer & Librettist.....	16 - 17
History of Opera in Atlanta .....	24

**Language/Vocabulary:** ELAG (K-5)(6-8) RI, ELAG (K-5) RF

Introduce Vocabulary terms (pre-performance activities).....	6
Vocabulary from <i>The Magic Flute</i> .....	14
<i>The Magic Flute</i> Vocabulary Activity .....	15
Glossary of Opera Terms.....	26
Opera Terms Activity.....	27

**Writing:** ELAG (K-5)(6-8) W, ELAG (K-5)(6-8) SL

Timeline Activity/Make your own Timeline.....	21
Writing a review .....	33

### SOCIAL STUDIES

**History:** SS (K-5)(6-8) WH14

Background on <i>The Magic Flute</i> .....	12
Mozart's Timeline / The World in Mozart's Time .....	18
Timeline Activity/Make your own Timeline .....	21
Meet the Composer & Librettist.....	16 - 17
History of Opera in Atlanta .....	24

### SCIENCE

S (K-5)(6-8) P1, S (K-5)(6-8) P2, S (6-8) CS1, S7L2, S8P4, SPS9, SAP1

Science of Operatic Voices .....	28
The Science of Sound .....	31

### MATHEMATICS

M (K-5)(6-8)

Elementary Math Problems .....	37
Middle School Math Problems .....	37

### FINE ARTS

**Music:** MA (K-5)(6-8) CN1, MA (K-5)(6-8) CN2, MA (K-5)(6-8) RE1, MA (K-5)(6-8) RE2

Opera 101.....	22
Types of Operatic Voice.....	30

**Theater:** TA (K-5)(6-8) RA1, TA (K-5)(6-8) RA2, TA (K-5)(6-8) CN2

Opera 101.....	22
Important jobs in opera .....	25
The Theater Activity .....	34

**Visual:** VA (K-5)(6-8) CR1, VA (K-5)(6-8) CR2, (K-5)(6-8) CR3

Design a Promotional Poster (Pre-performance activities) .....	6
Costume Design Activity .....	35

# 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 Magic Flute*. 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 and the Glossary of Terms for *The Magic Flute*. Discuss with the students which of these terms they may hear and/or see during the performance.

- Are any of these words familiar in other settings?
- Are there root words, prefixes or suffixes that are familiar or lend an idea to the meaning of the term?
- Use the activities on pages 15 and 27 to familiarize students with these terms.

### DESIGN A PROMOTIONAL POSTER

Create a poster to promote the upcoming performance of *The Magic Flute*. Display the poster in your school and send samples to The Atlanta Opera at [education@atlantaopera.org](mailto:education@atlantaopera.org).



The arrival of students at the Cobb Energy Centre to see the Student Short performance of *Don Pasquale* in 2017. (photos: Raftermen)



# SYNOPSIS

## WHAT'S IT ABOUT? WHO'S WHO?

### CAST

**TAMINO** (Tah-mee-no)

A young courageous prince

**PAMINA** (Pah-mee-na)

A beautiful princess, daughter of the Queen of the Night

**PAPAGENO** (Pah-pah-gay-no)

A bird-catcher in service to the Queen of the Night

**PAPAGENA** (Pah-pah-gay-na)

Papageno's sweetheart

**SARASTRO** (Sah-rast-ro)

High priest of the Sun

**THE QUEEN OF THE NIGHT**

powerful ruler of the realm of the moon and stars;  
mother of Pamina

### SYNOPSIS

After the Overture, we are introduced to Tamino, a handsome prince who is lost in a distant land and is being pursued by a serpent. He faints and three ladies, attendants of the Queen of the Night, appear and kill the serpent. They admire the attractive young man and leave to inform the Queen of his arrival. Tamino, our hero, awakes to a magical world.

Papageno, a birdcatcher, enters and Tamino assumes that he was the one who rescued him from the serpent – a feat for which Papageno happily takes credit. The Queen's ladies return and punish Papageno for lying by attaching a padlock to his mouth. They give Tamino a portrait of the Queen's daughter, Pamina, and tell of her abduction by Sarastro. The portrait of the beautiful young girl entrances Tamino. The Queen herself then appears and enlists Tamino's aid to rescue Pamina. The Ladies deliver a magic flute to Tamino and magic silver bells to Papageno, who is to accompany him on his quest. Promising that three young Spirits will come to guide them on their way, the Ladies depart. The men use the magic flute to summon their spirit guides to them. The power of the flute calls the birds of the forest as well as the spirits. Papageno, who has been very hesitant about the rescue attempt from the beginning, is sent off with the birds to find an escape route while Tamino follows the spirits to find Pamina.

Papageno finds Pamina and tells her that Tamino loves her and plans to return her to her mother. They are about to leave when Sarastro arrives. Pamina begs his forgiveness for trying to run away, admitting

that she was captured in true love's calling. Sarastro understands but is concerned for her safety as the Queen has become corrupt since the death of Pamina's father. Tamino arrives and finally meets Pamina. The two instantly fall in love but must undergo the Trials of Man (earth, fire, air, and water). There will be one individual test for each of them, and if they pass those, they will face the final two tests together.

Sarastro's guards guide Tamino and Papageno into their first trial, the Trial of Silence (or air). Neither of them are allowed to speak until the trial is completed. Tamino embraces the trial with fervor but Papageno is less than pleased until he learns that if he passes the test he will get a love. He agrees, but continues to chat, while Tamino tries in vain to be left alone.

In another area of the chambers, Sarastro's guard leads Pamina to the location of her trial, the Trial of Steadfastness (or Earth). Left alone, the Queen appears and commands her to take a knife from the earth and stab it into Sarastro's heart. When Sarastro arrives, Pamina is torn knowing that hurting someone is never the right choice. She confesses to Sarastro and he rewards her bravery and honesty with the admission that she has in fact passed her first trial. With the completion of her trial, he invites her to go and find Tamino.

Tamino is still taking the Trial of Silence when Pamina finds him. Pamina is overjoyed to see him again, but when he refuses to speak to her, she succumbs to despair. Tamino, unable to tell her what is happening and unable to bear her pain, leaves. Pamina, is comforted by the three Spirits who confess to her the reason for Tamino's silence and promise to lead her to him.

Meanwhile, Papageno is left alone frustrated, hungry, and on the hunt for his wife. The three Spirits encourage him to use the magic bells to summon his Papagena. They meet and fall in love and plan their lives together.

Tamino and Pamina arrive at their final trials where two Armored Men, greet them. Protected by the magic flute, they bravely complete the tests of fire and water and triumphantly enter the temple. Sarastro blesses Pamina and Tamino as all join in hailing the triumph of courage, virtue, wisdom and love.



# MEET THE CAST

## WHO'S WHO?



### BRENNA CORNER DIRECTOR

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

A magical accordion that can control the weather by taking in air, and then using the keyboard and buttons to determine types of weather (rain, hail, fog, sandstorm, blizzard, etc).

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

Who are we kidding, I loved music and drama class, but I also loved English and, as I grew up in Canada, I loved learning French.

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

"How the Elephant Got Its Trunk" by Rudyard Kipling

**What is your favorite color?**

I love the color Purple

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

I don't have Spotify or Pandora so I can't be 100% certain, but the last song I listened to was "Sweet Grace" by Michael Kaeshammer (a fantastic jazz singer and pianist), or something by Gordon Lightfoot.



### JESSICA DENNISON QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

I have always wanted to play drums, so it would have to be drums, and I think I would love to see people be a little more kind to each other, so it would be great if they could call on others to help defend those in need. A bit like Batman's signal.

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

History!

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

"Charlotte's Web," I love the character of Charlotte, a small spider, who is still kind, strong, and brave. It's one of the reasons my daughter's middle name is Charlotte.

**What is your favorite color?**

It's a tie between Blue and Red

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

Currently, it's "Drumming Song" by Florence+the Machine.



# MEET THE CAST



## CHRISTOPHER DUNHAM PAPAGENO

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

I would have a magical double-neck electric guitar. It would fly and I would ride it and bring rock to all the people. And also likely pizza, this guitar can definitely shoot fresh pizza.

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

History! I love a good story!

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

"The Hobbit" by J.R.R. Tolkien.

**What is your favorite color?**

Red

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

"Come Down" by Anderson Paak.



## BRYN HOLDSWORTH PAMINA

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

It would be a guitar and when I'd play it, it would magically transport me anywhere I wanted to go in the world.

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

My favorite subject was English because I loved writing stories and poems.

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

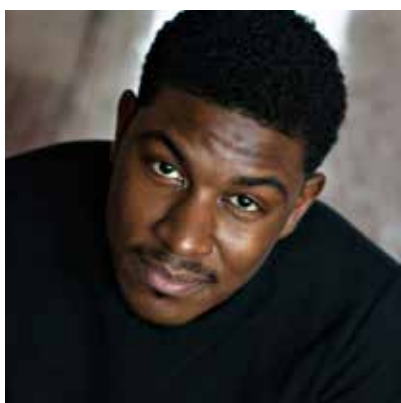
My favorite book was "The Lord of the Rings."

**What is your favorite color?**

Blue

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

The last song I listened to on my Spotify was "Woke Up Today" by Jacob Collier.



## ALLEN MICHAEL JONES SARASTRO

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

It would definitely be the trombone which would have the ability to freeze time with the blast of one note.

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

Outside of musical ensembles, my favorite subject in school was Algebra.

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

I struggled with reading early on, so I would make sure that I practiced reading every day with my favorite book, "Of Mice and Men" until I eventually got better.

**What is your favorite color?**

Green

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

As a musician, I find myself diving into a bevy of musical genres on a daily basis, but one song stands a top of all; "Ghost Town" by Kenneth Whalum.

# MEET THE CAST



## GINA PERREGRINO PAPAGENA

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

Magic castanets that could help me time travel

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

Art History

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

"Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom.

**What is your favorite color?**

Purple

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

"Despacito" by Luis Fonsi



## VALERIE POOL PIANIST

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

I would love to have a piano that could travel with me. So maybe it's not the instrument that would be magical, but the manner of packing it. Perhaps a magical bag like the one that Mary Poppins has when she first meets the children and takes a lamp and all sorts of other large objects out of it.

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

Music, of course, and then foreign languages.

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

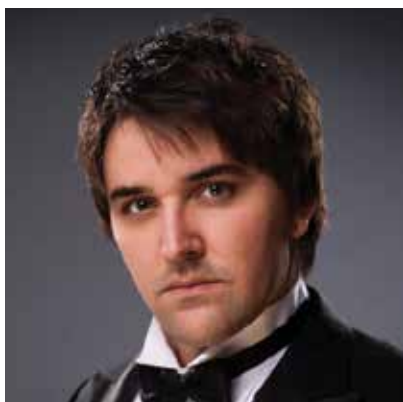
"Charlotte's Web"

**What is your favorite color?**

Green

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

The most recently played song in my Spotify app is "A Green Lowland of Pianos" by Samuel Barber



## JUSTIN STOLZ TAMINO

**If you could have a magic instrument of your choice, what would it be?**

**What type of power would it have?**

I think I would like to have a magical guitar, so I could play any song I wanted at anytime!

**What was your favorite subject in school?**

Growing up, I always loved gym class, I really liked playing dodgeball and football.

**What was your favorite book as a child?**

As a child I read comic books, usually Wolverine comics. He's is one of my favourites, alongside Batman. He's short and Canadian, just like me!

**What is your favorite color?**

Red, but sometimes blue! I tend to wear more blue clothing.

**What is the last song or most played song on your Spotify or Pandora app?**

"Living on a Prayer" by Bon Jovi

# A NOTE FROM...

BRENNA CORNER - TRANSLATOR & DIRECTOR



Above the Student Short of *Don Pasquale*, and below The Studio Tour of *Cinderella*, both directed by Brenna Corner. (photos: Raftermen, Rebecca Danis)



When I was approached to create a new English adaptation of *The Magic Flute* for The Atlanta Opera, there were a couple of things about the story that immediately jumped out at me. Foremost amongst my concerns was that I wanted to make sure this story didn't depict women as weak or needing to be saved by men. When *The Magic Flute* was originally written in 1791, women were very much subordinate to the men in their lives. For a modern audience, we felt it was important to change that, so we altered the story to give Pamina her own trial to overcome. This sort of female empowerment would not have existed in Mozart's time. During this time, there was a group called the Freemasons, of which Mozart was a member. They believed in many things including that social rank was not connected to nobility of the spirit, but that people of low class could be noble in spirit just as nobly born could be mean-spirited.





# BACKGROUND

## ABOUT THE MAGIC FLUTE



The Atlanta Opera's 2010 mainstage production of *The Magic Flute* at the Cobb Energy Centre. (photo: Tim Wilkerson)

Mozart composed *The Magic Flute* almost 220 years ago at the end of his all too brief life. He never reached the age of 36, yet he is known as one of the greatest composers of all time. In his short lifetime, he wrote 20 operas, 41 symphonies (the first at the age of eight!), and countless vocal and instrumental pieces for solo and group performances. His works are heard around the world in opera houses, concert halls, and classical radio stations to this day.

Mozart was born into a musical family in Salzburg, Austria in 1756. His sister was also a gifted musician, but his father Leopold, a musician and composer himself, devoted himself primarily to the musical training of the extraordinarily gifted young Wolfgang. Father and son traveled throughout Europe so that the child prodigy

could entertain audiences at the various royal courts. Though this touring was profitable for the family and an incredible education for the young boy, it was a very difficult life, frequently complicated by illness.

Musicians in those times relied on the patronage of wealthy individuals for their income. They performed on command and composed in response to specific commissions from these individuals. As with performers and sports figures today, there was a contract binding them to a particular person (today probably an organization) and location. Mozart was not treated particularly well by his musical sponsor, the Archbishop of Salzburg, and the two had a stormy break in 1780. So at the age of 25, Mozart took up a lifestyle unusual for an artist of that time and began composing, teaching, and performing independently. Also about this time, he fell in love with and married Constanze Weber, the sister of a former love.

Although happily married, Mozart and Constanze faced financial problems throughout their lives together, in large part because neither of them was skilled at managing money. Even though Mozart was very productive during the next few years, and he published quite a bit of music, his reputation steadily growing, he was continually borrowing money.

During the same time period, Mozart became a Freemason, undergoing initiation trials that play such an important part in *The Magic Flute*. The Freemasons are a secret society advocating universal brotherhood, controversial during Mozart's time as a possible threat to the nobility. Mozart's father Leopold and Emanuel Schikaneder [SCHICK-ah-nay-der], the librettist (person who writes the words for an opera) for *The Magic Flute*, were Freemasons as well.

Mozart's years of greatest fame began in the mid 1780's. Major works, particularly his great operas with Italian texts, date from this time. They include *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786) and *Don Giovanni* (1787), both of which continue to be performed often on stages throughout the world.

In 1791, his last year, Mozart produced his final opera, *The Magic Flute*, to a German text. The work was commissioned by Emanuel Schikaneder (1751-1812) for Vienna's Theater auf der Wieden, where he was the director. Schikaneder was at that time a well-known, respected "man of the theater". For more than thirty years, he worked as an actor, singer, dancer, playwright, and occasional composer. He asked Mozart



# BACKGROUND

## ABOUT THE MAGIC FLUTE

to write a **singspiel** for his theater, suggested the subject matter, and not only wrote the **libretto** himself, but also performed the role of Papageno in the first production of *The Magic Flute*.

Today, opera audiences the world over know and love *The Magic Flute*. It is an instant favorite for many newcomers to opera and also treasured by the most serious music scholars. It is an opera that can be enjoyed on multiple levels: as a joyous fairy tale on the one hand, and as a work of the greatest profundity on the other. Either way, audiences always leave a performance taking memorable musical moments with them.

## VOCABULARY

### SINGSPIEL

A musico-dramatic work with a German text, especially a work written in the 18th or early 19th century in which spoken dialogue alternates with songs and sometimes ensembles, choruses, or more extended musical pieces. The settings of such works is frequently rural, sometimes fantastic or exotic; the characters are often artisans or from the lower middle class and exhibit simpler or humbler virtues than characters from serious opera. There were two principal schools of Singspiel composition in the 18th century, the Viennese and the north German. Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is an example of the Viennese style, and represents a culmination of the genre.

### LIBRETTO

The text of an opera or oratorio; originally, and more specifically, the small book containing the text, printed for sale to the audience.

*Used with permission of Lyric Opera of Chicago.*

## MOZART & FREEMASONRY

A fraternal organization whose members are committed to ideals of morality, justice, and reason, Freemasonry originally grew out of the medieval guilds of stonemasons and the study of the philosophical aspects of math and architecture. Among the central ideas of Masonic thought and practice are the exploration of the nature of man and society and a quasi-religious ritual and mysticism. From its initial popularity in England, the movement had spread across the European continent by the early 18th century.



The Atlanta Opera's 2010 mainstage production of *The Magic Flute* at the Cobb Energy Centre. (photo: Tim Wilkerson)

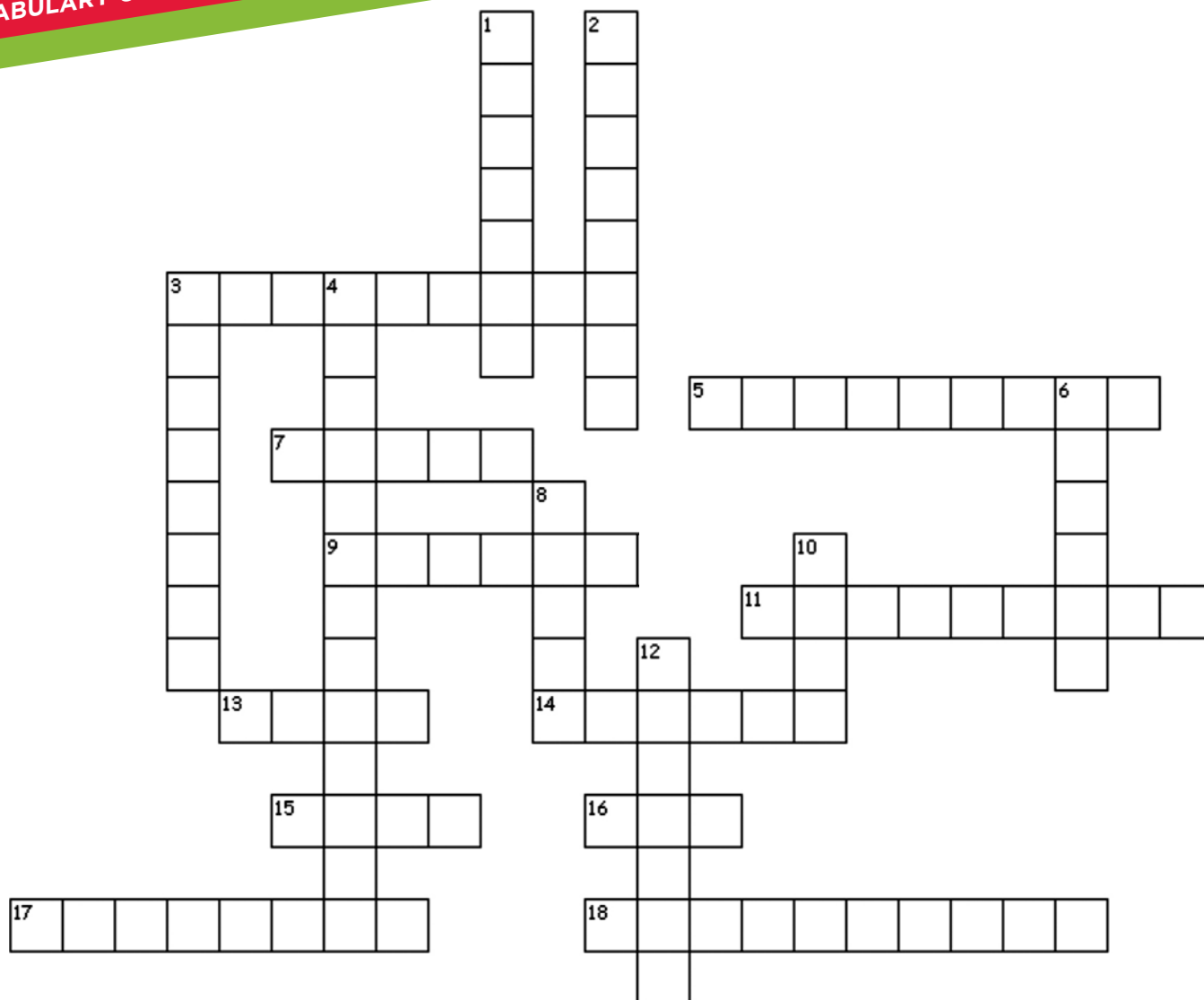
The first Masonic lodge in Vienna was founded in 1742, and within 40 years, another lodge, "Zur wahren Eintracht" ("True Concord"), had become the foremost community of Viennese artistic, scientific, and literary thinkers. Mozart joined its smaller sister lodge "Zur Wohltätigkeit" ("Beneficence") in 1784. From his letters it is evident that Freemasonry played a large role in Mozart's life, and he composed several works for use with Masonic rituals (including the cantatas *Dir, Seele des Weltalls*, and *Die Maurerfreude*) as well as many more that more generally allude to Masonic symbolism or ideals. Within his lodge, Mozart also found friends and supporters who assisted him financially, with both gifts and commissions for compositions. Of all his works, the one most frequently associated with Masonic ideals is *The Magic Flute*. Its evocation of ancient Egypt aligns with Masonic interests, and it prominently uses the number three, which held special significance in Freemasonry: the opera includes Three Ladies as attendants to the Queen of the Night; Three Spirits; three trials that Tamino must endure; a prominent musical motive built from three chords; and a significant role for the key of E-flat major (indicated by three flats). Although Masonic influences are only one aspect of *The Magic Flute*, the opera demonstrates the interests of Viennese Freemasonry in its semi-religious program of enlightenment and progress.

*Used with permission of The Metropolitan Opera.*

<b>BEWITCHING</b>	enchanting; charming; fascinating
<b>CHARRED</b>	to burn or reduce to charcoal
<b>CONDEMNED</b>	to express an unfavorable or adverse judgment on; indicate strong disapproval of
<b>FATE</b>	the power that is often believed to decide what will happen in human life or history
<b>FORTRESS</b>	a large, fortified building or area, often around a town or settlement
<b>FOWLER</b>	a hunter of birds
<b>HEED</b>	to give one's attention to; listen to; take notice of
<b>MOLT</b>	to cast or shed the feathers, skin, or the like, that will be replaced by a new growth.
<b>NAUGHT</b>	nothing
<b>OBSCURITY</b>	the state or condition of being unknown
<b>PADLOCKS</b>	a portable or detachable lock with a pivoted or sliding shackle that can be passed through a link, ring, staple, or the like.
<b>PERSEVERE</b>	to continue steadfastly in a task or course of action or hold steadfastly to a belief or commitment, to persist
<b>QUELLED</b>	to overpower or suppress with force; put down
<b>SLY</b>	devious or not to be trusted
<b>STEADFASTNESS</b>	able to be trusted or relied on; loyal
<b>TYRANT</b>	a ruler who governs absolutely with unfairness and cruelty
<b>VALOR</b>	boldness in facing danger; courage; bravery
<b>VANQUISH</b>	to subdue or defeat by or as if by greater force; conquer; overcome
<b>YEARN</b>	to have a strong desire, craving, or wish for something

# ACTIVITY

## VOCABULARY CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

3. To continue steadfastly in a task or course of action or hold steadfastly to a belief or commitment, to persist
5. The state or condition of being unknown
7. Boldness in facing danger; courage; bravery
9. A hunter of birds
11. To express an unfavorable or adverse judgment on; indicate strong disapproval of
13. The power that is often believed to decide what will happen in human life or history
14. Nothing
15. To give one's attention to; listen to; take notice of
16. Devious or not to be trusted
17. To subdue or defeat by or as if by greater force; conquer; overcome
18. Enchanting; charming; fascinating

### DOWN

1. To burn or reduce to charcoal
2. A large, fortified building or area, often around a town or settlement
3. A portable or detachable lock with a pivoted or sliding shackle that can be passed through a link, ring, staple, or the like.
4. Able to be trusted or relied on; loyal
6. A ruler who governs absolutely with unfairness and cruelty
8. To have a strong desire, craving, or wish for something
10. To cast or shed the feathers, skin, or the like, that will be replaced by a new growth.
12. To overpower or suppress with force; put down

# COMPOSER

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756 - 1791)



**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART** was born Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart on January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria, the son of Anna Maria Pertl and Leopold Mozart, a skilled violinist, leading music teacher, and successful composer. Wolfgang and his sister Maria Anna ("Nannerl") were the only two of their seven children to survive.

Mozart showed a remarkable talent for music very early on, and at five, he was composing his first pieces. That same year, he and Nannerl, also highly gifted in music, were taken to Munich by their father to play at the Bavarian court. A few months later, they went to Vienna and were heard at the imperial court and in noble houses.

In mid-1763, the family set out on a tour of western Europe, including Munich, Frankfurt, Paris, Amsterdam, and London (where they spent 15 months). Mozart's first pieces were published in Paris during this time, and in London, he composed his first symphonies- all by the age of eight years old.

In 1768, Mozart wrote a one-act German singspiel (literally "sing-play"), *Bastien und Bastienne*, which was followed by *La finta semplice* (*The Fake Innocent*), an opera in three acts. Within the year, another tour

would follow, bringing the now 13 year-old Mozart to Italy, then considered a preferred educational destination for aspiring young musicians. Over 15 months, he traveled to all the main musical centers in Italy, and commissions began to roll in- an opera in Milan, an oratorio in Padua, and more.

Returning from Italy in 1773, Mozart gained employment as a court musician in Salzburg, allowing him the opportunity to compose in a great number of genres, including symphonies, sonatas, string quartets, serenades, and the occasional opera. Nevertheless, Mozart gradually grew more discontented with Salzburg and at age 25, moved to Vienna in order to continue developing his career.

It was in Vienna that Mozart would meet his wife, Constanze, and strongly establish himself as a composer. His opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) achieved a huge success and was soon being performed throughout German-speaking Europe. However, despite this achievement, Mozart focused on his work as a piano soloist and writer of concertos, and did not return to opera until four years later, when he composed *The Marriage of Figaro*. The success of this opera led to a commission for *Don Giovanni*, which premiered in 1787, and was followed in 1790 by *Così Fan Tutti*. All three operas are now considered among Mozart's most important works and are mainstays of the operatic repertoire.

Despite the popularity of his work, Mozart struggled financially in this period as his career began to decline. He moved his family from Vienna to cheaper lodgings in the suburb of Alsergrund, and began to borrow money from friends. 1791 would be Mozart's last year, but was, until his final illness struck, one of great productivity. This was the year he completed a series of string quartets, a piano concerto, a clarinet concerto, and of course, his opera *The Magic Flute*.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's death came at a young age, even for the time period. At the time of his death at age 35, Mozart was considered one of the greatest composers of all time. His music presented a bold expression, oftentimes complex and dissonant, and required high technical mastery from the musicians who performed it. Mozart conceived and perfected the grand forms of symphony, opera, string ensemble, and concerto that marked the classical period, and have continued to fascinate and provide enjoyment to musicians and music lovers alike.

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Wolfgang-Amadeus-Mozart>





**EMANUEL SCHIKANEDER**, who was born Johann Joseph Schikaneder in Bavaria, was a prominent actor, singer, composer, playwright, director, and theatre manager. As a young man, he began his career as an actor with a small traveling company, but by the age of 22, he had written and starred in his first operetta. Five years later he became the manager of his own company, and his growing interest in music led to his acquaintance with the Mozart family in 1780.

Schikaneder's company had settled in Vienna by 1784, and it was then that Schikaneder turned his attention to opera, commissioning musical scores to fit his own libretti. His libretto for *The Magic Flute*, set to music by his friend Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and his superb performance in the role of Papageno at the premiere in 1791, raised him to the peak of his popularity.

Although today Schikaneder is primarily known for his collaboration with Mozart, he was widely respected in his time, and for decades after his death. Over the course of his career, Schikaneder's work included 56 libretti and 45 plays. His legacy survives in the form of the Theater an der Wien, the Viennese theatre he opened in 1801 which remains in operation to this day.

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Emanuel-Schikaneder>



An etching of Emanuel Schikaneder as the first Papageno.

# TIMELINE

## THE WORLD IN MOZART'S TIME

History is much more than just a class we have to take in school. Everyone has a personal history that is affected by the time in which he or she lives. For example, great changes were occurring in the world during Mozart's time. Look over the time line. How might these changes have affected the people of Mozart's time? The questions will help guide you.

# 1756

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is born on January 27, one of the two surviving children of Leopold Mozart, a composer in the service of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg.

Beginning of Seven Years War between Britain and France.

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# 1759

Composer, George Frederic Handel dies.

Mary Wollstonecraft (early feminist writer) is born.

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# 1762

At the age of seven, Mozart performs for the Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, as a keyboard prodigy and composer. Over the next 11 years, the Mozart family tours throughout Europe, performing for members of the royalty and nobility.

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# 1764

The invention of the "spinning jenny" makes sewing thread production up to 80 times faster.

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# 1769

Napoleon is born.

James Watt patents the steam engine.

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# 1770

Beethoven (German composer) is born.

## 1774

The First Continental Congress convenes.

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## 1775

The American Revolution begins.

The Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery (first antislavery society in America) is formed.

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## 1776

Emperor Joseph II dismisses the impresario of the Burgtheater, one of the two imperial court theaters in Vienna, and re-opens it as the “Nationaltheater,” the home of German drama. Two years later, Joseph founds the National-Singspiel, intended to encourage the composition of music dramas in German. Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) is the most successful of the singspiels created for the Burgtheater before the failure of the National-Singspiel in 1788.

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## 1780

Pennsylvania is the first state to abolish slavery.

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## 1781

Mozart relocates to Vienna, seeking to make his living as an independent composer and performer in the culturally rich Hapsburg capital, rather than solely under contract to a wealthy patron or the church.

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## 1783

The American Revolution ends.

## 1784

Mozart becomes a Freemason and joins the Viennese lodge “Zur Wohltätigkeit” (“Beneficence”), a community of liberal intellectuals whose philosophical interests aligned closely with the Enlightenment concerns of reason, nature, and the universal brotherhood of fellow men.

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## 1786

The threshing machine is invented in Scotland, making wheat harvesting faster and easier.

Mozart completes *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the first of his collaborations with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte (followed by *Don Giovanni* in 1787 and *Così fan tutte* in 1790). These three works, masterpieces of dramatic structure and musical expression, are considered among the pinnacles of the opera buffa genre.

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## 1787

The United States Constitution is ratified.

The German poet Christoph Martin Wieland publishes *Dschinnistan*, a collection of stories, several of which inspire the plot of *Die Zauberflöte*, “Lulu, oder Die Zauberflöte,” tells the story of Prince Lulu, who is enlisted by a “radiant fairy” to rescue a maiden who has been captured by an evil sorcerer, and who is provided with a magic flute to help him in his mission.

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## 1789

The United States Bill of Rights is ratified.

The storming of the Bastille in Paris begins the French Revolution.

The actor, librettist, and theatrical producer Emanuel Schikaneder takes over the direction of the Freihaus-Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna. His repertory includes musical dramas (mostly comprising singspiels), spoken plays with spectacular staging effects, as well as works by serious German dramatists. Its audience bridges the different classes of Viennese society.

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## 1791

*Die Zauberflöte* premieres on September 30 at the Theater auf der Wieden, with Schikaneder performing the role of Papageno and Mozart conducting. The opera receives 20 performances by the end of the following month, and over 200 performances by 1800.

Mozart falls ill on November 22 and dies on December 5, likely from rheumatic fever.



### QUESTIONS

1. Mozart lived during a time known as The Enlightenment, or The Age of Reason. Thinkers of this time believed the human ability to reason was the key to happiness and progress. Philosophers discussed ideals of human dignity and equality, which greatly influenced both the rulers and the ruled. Pick one event from the time line that was most likely influenced by Enlightenment thinking. Explain your choice.
2. The Industrial Revolution saw its beginnings during Mozart's lifetime. This period saw the invention of machines that could do work faster and with less labor. As a result, industry grew quickly and the roles of workers began to change. Pick one event from the time line that most likely played a part in the Industrial Revolution. Explain how the event could have changed the lives of people living in the 1700s.
3. How have the events shown on the timeline affected your life?

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### MAKE YOUR OWN TIME LINE!

Draw a vertical line on a piece of paper. Write your birth year at the top and the current year at the bottom. Then, write or draw five important world events that have happened during your lifetime. Answer these questions:

1. How have the world events during your lifetime affected the way you live?
2. How have the events affected the lives of others?
3. How do world events affect your life differently than they affected the lives of your parents? Your grandparents? Mozart?

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.

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

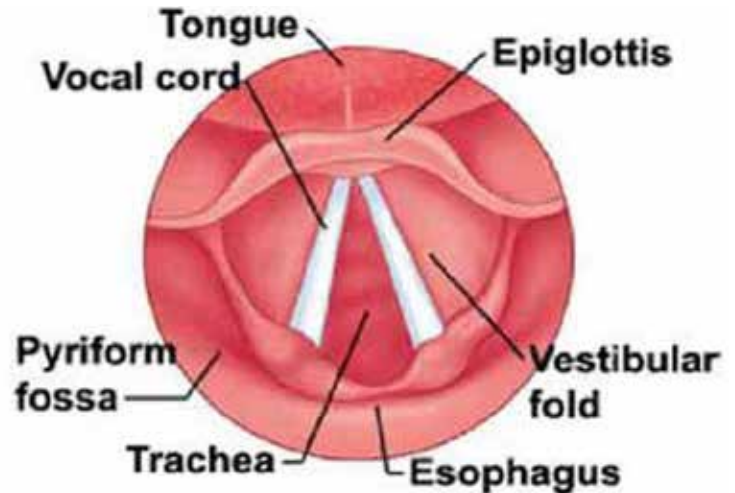
- an extensive range (the ability to sing both high and low)
- varying degrees of volume (loud and soft)
- resonance in the chest and sinus cavities (produces a full or round sound)
- an ability to project or fill a large space without amplification

### 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!

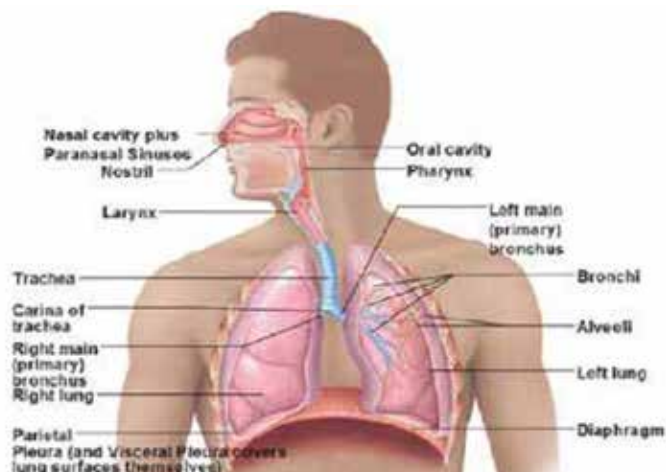
### THE VOCAL CORDS

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.

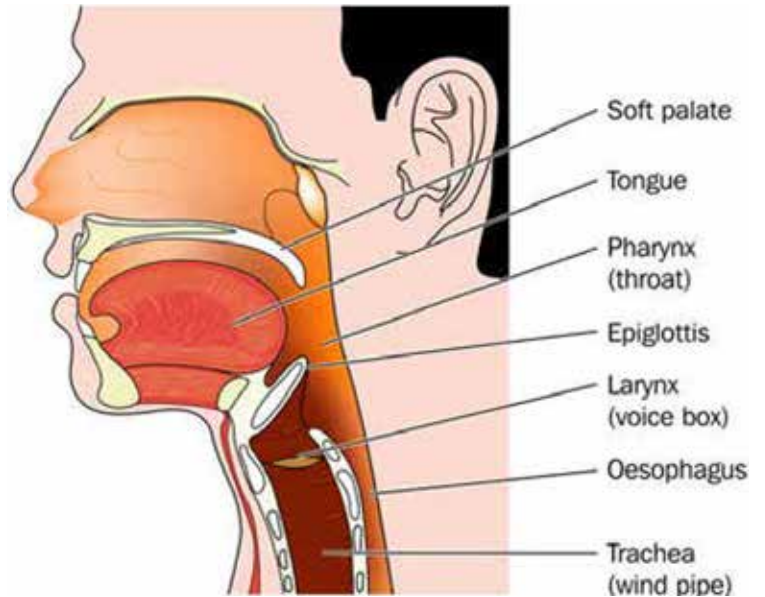




### RESONANCE

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.

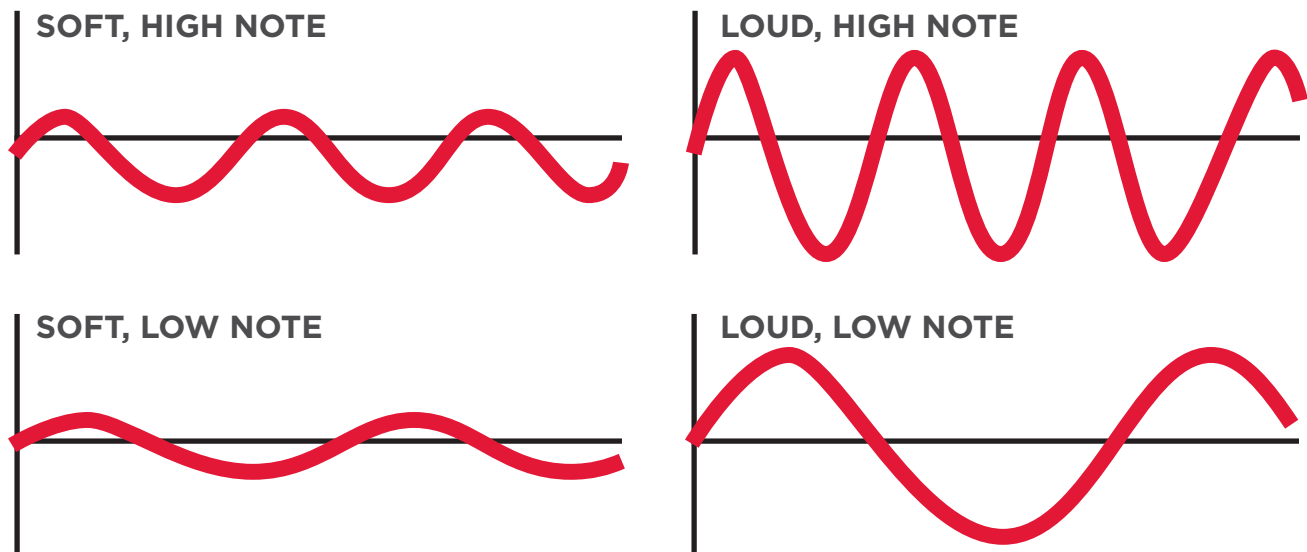
## THINK ABOUT IT!

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:



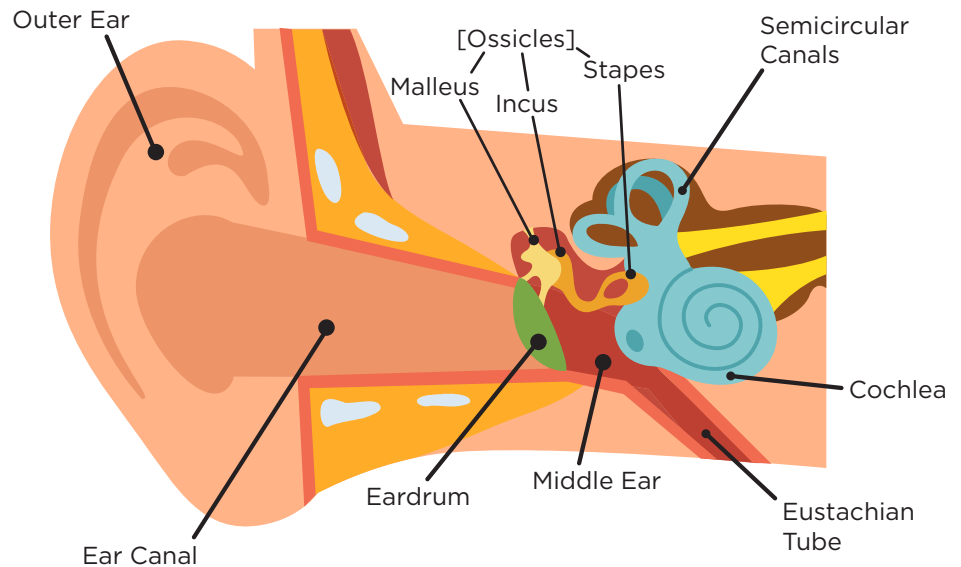
## TRY THIS!

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!



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?

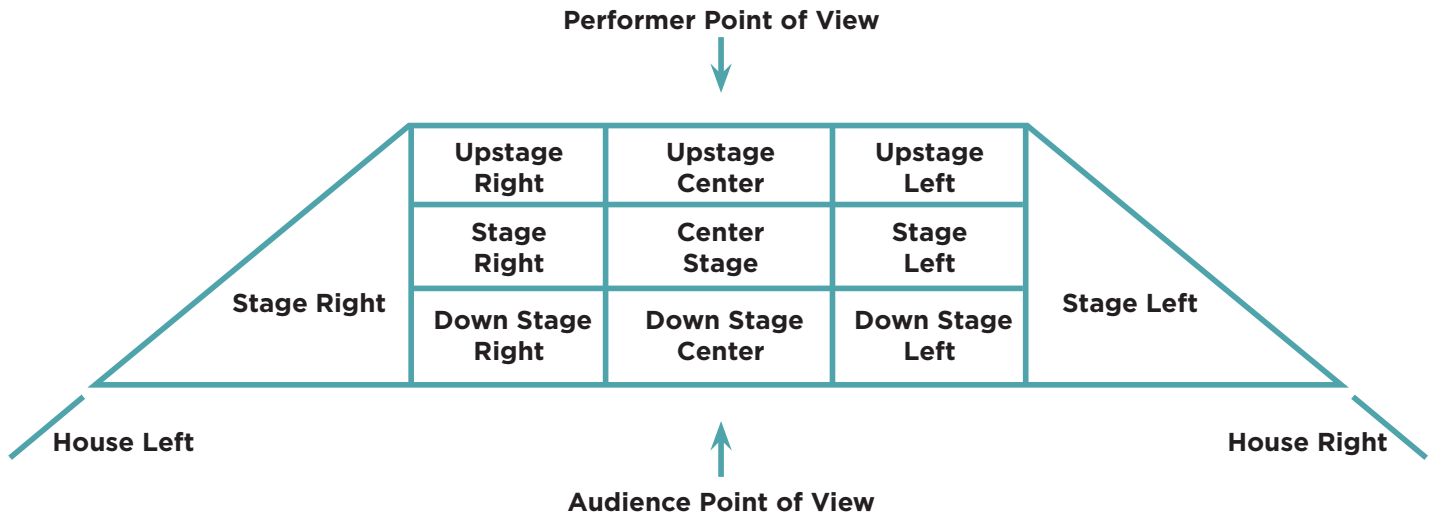
Share your critique with us! The Atlanta Opera wants to know what you thought of our performance. If you would like to share your review with us, please send it on!

The Atlanta Opera Education Department, 1575 Northside Dr., NW, Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30318 or [education@atlantaopera.org](mailto:education@atlantaopera.org)

# THEATER

## ACTIVITY

Review the stage diagram below with the students. Draw the diagram on the whiteboard and have students come up and write in each part of the stage.



Long ago, stages used to be raked or slanted toward the audience. If you went away from the audience, or climbed up the incline, it became upstage. Down the incline was downstage. Remember, stage-left and stage-right are from the actor's perspective when they are on stage, not the audience.

- Ask all of your students to face in the same direction. Facing you or a wall is good.
- Have your students close their eyes and stand with their feet flat on the floor.
- Now, ask them to slowly raise their heels off of the floor and keep them that way.
- This is how it would feel to stand on a raked (or slanted) stage.
- Their heels are upstage, or on the higher part of the stage, near the back, and their toes are facing the audience. Have them imagine they are walking up and down, like they were actually going to points where the floor was higher and lower.
- Have them try to move around a bit and see what it feels like.
- Give them some stage directions to follow.
  - **EXAMPLE:** Cross stage-left or walk downstage, etc.
- Increase the complexity of the stage directions, making them two or more parts.
  - **EXAMPLE:** Walk to stage-right, then cross to up-stage left.
- Have students direct each other, giving simple stage directions.
- Students can create their own scene from the opera, block them and then perform them for the class.

# COSTUME DESIGN

## ACTIVITY

Using the sketches provided, design costumes for Papagena & Papageno, two of opera's favorite characters from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Designed and sketched by Joanna Schmink, Costume Designer for The Atlanta Opera.

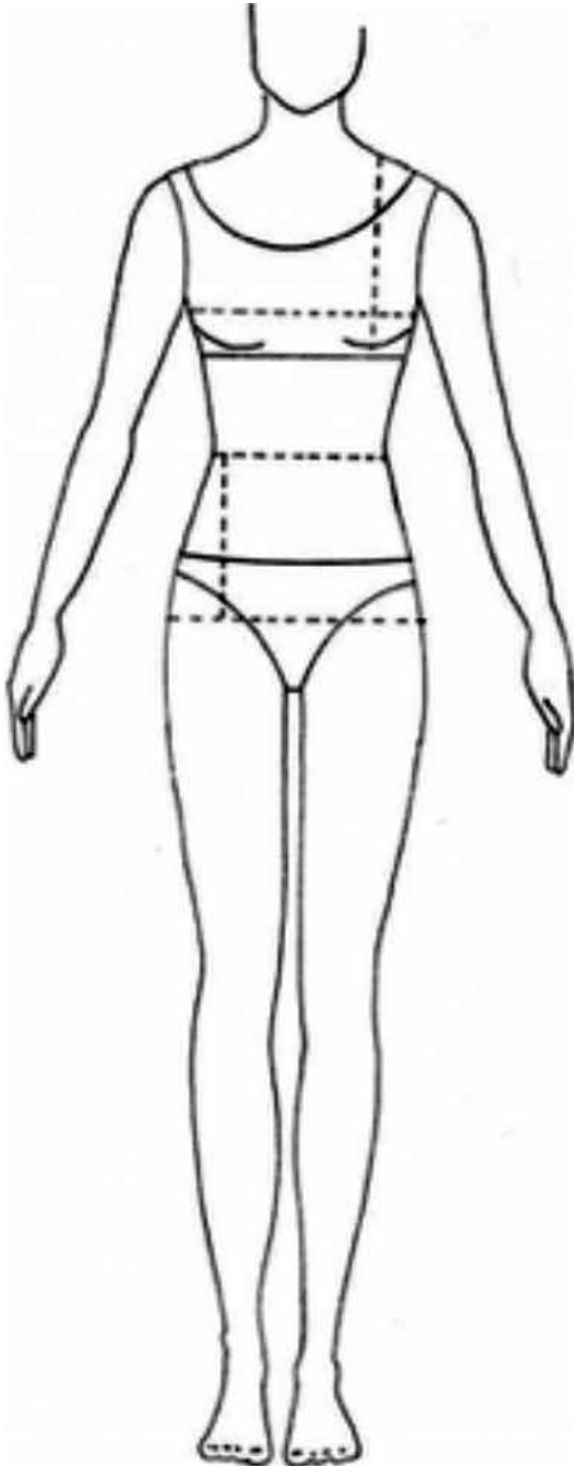


# COSTUME DESIGN

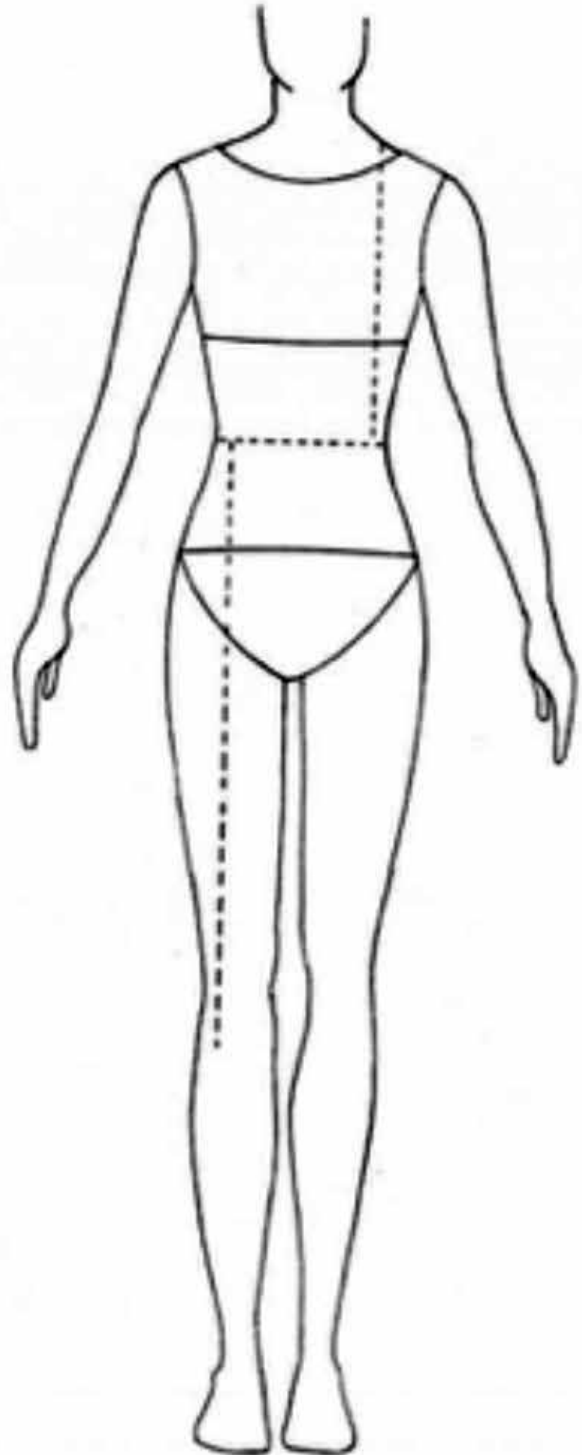
## ACTIVITY

Draw a costume for any character in the opera. The costume can be traditional, modern or abstract, but you must explain why you made the choices you did. Include as many details as possible. If you'd prefer not to draw, feel free to decorate paper, then cut and paste it to the costume template.

**FRONT**



**BACK**





## ELEMENTARY LEVEL MATH PROBLEMS

1. Mr. Smith wants to buy 2 tickets to see *Madama Butterfly* at Cobb Energy Centre. The tickets are \$8.00 a piece. How much will the tickets cost Mr. Smith?
2. If you wanted to buy 5 tickets to *Così fan tutte* and they are \$3.00 each, how much will you spend?
3. You owe \$11.00 for two opera tickets. You give the ticket seller \$20.00. How much change should you get back?
4. Your teacher has \$100 to spend on tickets for *The Magic Flute*. Tickets cost \$5.00 for students and \$10.00 for adults. How many student tickets could she buy? How many adult tickets could she buy?
5. Your class is going on a field trip to see a performance of *Carmen*. There are 20 students going and 5 chaperones. Tickets cost \$7.00 for students and \$12.00 for chaperones. 1 chaperone gets a free ticket. How much will the tickets cost for field trip?

### ELEMENTARY ANSWERS

1.  $8+8=\$16$  or  $8 \times 2=\$16$
2.  $3+3+3+3+3=\$15$  or  $5 \times 3=\$15$
3.  $20-11=\$9.00$
4.  $100/5=20$  students,  $100/10=10$  adults
5.  $20 \times 7=\$140$  for students,  $4 \times 12=\$48$  for adults,  $140+48=\$188$  total

## MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL MATH PROBLEMS

1. Mr. Smith wants to buy 75 tickets to see *Madama Butterfly* at the Cobb Energy Centre. The tickets are \$12.00 a piece. How much will the tickets cost Mr. Smith?
2. You want to buy a block of tickets to *Così fan tutte*. Tickets are \$59.00 each but there is a special package offering a 20% discount for group sales. You have 64 people in your group. How much will you spend?
3. You owe \$111.00 for two opera tickets. You charge this on your credit card and there is a 2% fee. What is your total cost?
4. Your teacher has \$250.00 to spend on tickets for *Rigoletto*. Tickets cost \$7.00 for students and \$10.00 for adults. She needs to buy tickets for 29 students and 4 adults. Does she have enough money? Explain your answer.
5. Your school is going on a field trip to see a student matinee of *The Magic Flute*. There are 452 students going and 22 chaperones. Tickets cost \$7.00 for students and \$10.00 for chaperones. 1 chaperone per every 20 students gets a free ticket. How much will the tickets cost for field trip? How many free chaperone tickets will your group receive?

### MIDDLE SCHOOL ANSWERS

1.  $75 \times 12=\$900$
2.  $59 \times 64=\$3,776.00$   $\times 20\% = \$755.20$   $3,776.00-755.20=\$3,020.80$  total
3.  $111 \times 2\% = 2.22$   $111+2.22=\$113.22$
4. Yes  $29 \times 7=\$203$  students,  $10 \times 4=\$40$  adults  $203+40=\$243$
5.  $452 \times 7=\$3,164$  for students,  $18 \times 10=\$180$  for adults,  $3,164+180=\$3,344.00$  total - 4 free chaperones

# SUPPORT

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