



2015-16
SEASON
— for —
YOUNG
PEOPLE

Teacher Guidebook



DIE FLEDERMAUS

presented by NASHVILLE OPERA

Sponsored by  **REGIONS**

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Thank you, teachers, for giving your students this wonderful opportunity. They will certainly enjoy the experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.

Jim Schmitz
Executive Vice President, Area Executive
Middle Tennessee Area



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Dear Teachers~

We are so pleased to be able to partner with Nashville Opera to bring students to the invited dress rehearsal of *Die Fledermaus*.

We thank Nashville Opera for the use of their extensive study guide for adults. It will help you prepare your students for the performance with a synopsis, opera background, and musical information. Additional information and short explorations are included in this booklet for you to share with students.

Please look particularly at the opera rehearsal information, which will help students understand the special factors present in an invited dress rehearsal.

Enjoy!

TPAC
Education

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**Nashville Opera Guidebook written
by Anna Young**

TPAC Guidebook compiled by Lattie Brown

Modern couples in 19th century dress dancing the Viennese Waltz at the Hofburg Royal Palace in Vienna. The dance is still popular today in exhibitions and competitions, and the music by both Johann Strauss I and Johann Strauss II is still played by symphonies all over the world.

Opera Dress Rehearsal

Most final dress rehearsals are almost exactly like a performance. The director will stop the action if needed, but it is exceedingly rare and generally only for a technical malfunction on the stage. Like theatre, an opera dress rehearsal is the final chance before the performance to make a complicated collaboration come together seamlessly.

In the Studio

The Nashville Opera's rehearsal schedule begins with two weeks at the opera rehearsal space in the new Noah Liff Opera Center. Stage action is mapped out, the performers experiment with their characters, and the director's ideas for the flow of the opera are shared with the cast. The time period may seem short for such a large production.

It only works because opera singers begin rehearsals knowing every bit of their music by heart and having rehearsed it themselves over a period of months, sometimes years. If they do not know the role on the first day, the director has the right to replace them immediately. The opera company will fly in a new singer to take over their part. Once opera singers learn a particular role, they keep it in their repertory and play the role many more times at different opera companies around the world.

In the Theater

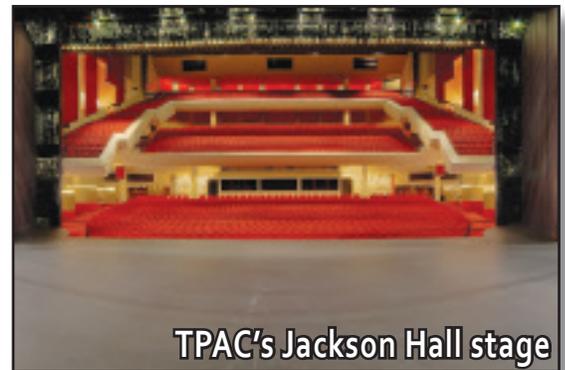
Four to five days before the first performance, the set is "loaded in" to the theater, and the lights are hung and focused. Students will notice a table in the middle of the orchestra level seats for the stage manager, the director, and the designers.

This serves as a central location for communicating with the singers and crew onstage, the conductor in the orchestra pit, and the technicians in the lighting booth. During the final dress rehearsal, students may notice lighting changes as the designer makes final adjustments.

Technical Rehearsals and Dress Rehearsals

Opera rehearsals use a skilled piano accompanist, but once the company moves into the theater,

the performers will have a *Sitzprobe* rehearsal (a German word meaning to sit and try out.) The *Sitzprobe* is a "sing-thru" with the orchestra and conductor, concentrating on the nuances of the music only without staging. It is the first time that the orchestra and singers put together the work that they have been doing in separate orchestra rehearsals and staging rehearsals.



TPAC's Jackson Hall stage

A piano tech rehearsal is held without costumes to let the singers get used to the set and give the set crew their first chance to practice scene changes. The next rehearsal is a piano dress rehearsal that adds costumes. Finally, the orchestra dress rehearsal puts all the elements together: lighting, set changes, costumes, the orchestra, and the supertitles (the English translations of the lyrics, called the libretto.) The supertitles will be in operation at the final invited dress rehearsal.

Final Dress

The final dress rehearsal allows the last polish before the performance, and invited dress rehearsals add the final important element to the opera, an audience. Because of the strenuous nature of the singing, a singer may choose to "mark" on the final dress rehearsal in order to preserve their voices for all the performances. "Marking" does not have the same meaning in opera as it does in theatre. In theatre, it means just going through the blocking and the words of the lines. In opera, it specifically means that the singer may choose not to sing at full volume, not pushing their voice to the utmost. All of their acting and vocal expression will be at full power, however, with all the passion and conviction that opera requires. You will be their first audience; they are ready and excited to give you the story and the music.

Opera 101 ~ Hints to get the most out of opera

Prince Orlofsky finally laughs.
With thanks to Volksoper in Vienna

Step 1~ Know the story!

In opera, it is important to know as much as possible about what is going on beforehand, including the ending. By all means, read the synopsis and libretto; listen to a recording! Once the music, the voices, the setting, the lights, and the dramatic staging come together at the performance, audience members will be better able to fit all the elements seamlessly together into the plot. The plot then becomes the springboard for the real power of opera, the music.



Step 2~Experience the music!

Composers use many tools to communicate with music. They create melodies that evoke a variety of emotions. They use tempos (how slow or fast) and dynamics (how loud or soft) and rhythms (the frequency and pattern of beat). They choose particular instruments to add color to the music they have written. Think of instrument choice as a type of painting for your ears! The term "soundscape" is often used in describing the music of an opera, and it can set the atmosphere and give information about character and plot. What is it telling you?

Step 3 ~Understand the singers!

Opera singers are vocal athletes. They practice every day to exercise their vocal chords and their extensive breath control. The combinations of notes that they have to sing are very difficult, and the things that they can do with their voices are extreme. You can easily compare a regular singing voice and an opera singing voice to a weekend jogger and a gold-medal-winning Olympic track champion! BUT, the reason that their voices are prized is that they can express so much emotion on a grand scale.

Step 4~Plunge in!

This is the most important step. Everything about opera is over-the-top, on the edge, enormous in every way. It's an art form that thrives on its intensity and passion. Opera stories portray people at their most extreme, and the singers and the music communicate in ways that words alone cannot. You have to let go, allow yourself to stop thinking and analyzing and simply FEEL THE EMOTION!

(with acknowledgements to *Opera 101* by Fred Plotkin for idea organization above)

Short Explorations

Scandalous Waltzing

Johann Strauss II was known for his mastery of all kinds of dance music, most famously pieces for the Viennese Waltz, which he included quite memorably in *Die Fledermaus* and his other operettas. Both the musical form and the dance may seem old-fashioned to students, but they should know that a century earlier, the waltz was positively revolutionary. In fact, one pamphlet in 1797 was titled *Proof that Waltzing is the Main Source of Weakness of the Body and Mind of our Generation*.

The waltz took dancing at social gatherings from a large group all moving in patterns together to the group breaking into pairs dancing independently. The large group was communal and public; the pairs gave a sense of a more private encounter as well as requiring closer and more prolonged physical contact. Dancer and historian Belinda Quirey claims that, "the advent of the Waltz in polite society was quite simply the greatest change in dance form and dancing manners that has happened in our history." Of course, the shock value of the waltz and the opposition to it fueled its popularity. The music of both Strauss and his father further popularized the waltz until it had become mainstream and accepted by the time *Die Fledermaus* premiered, in 1874.

Quirey, Belinda 1976. *May I have the pleasure? The story of popular dancing*. p66 The century of waltz.

Breathe like Singers

The power of opera singer's breath control is formidable. They must be able to sing very complicated musical passages, to sustain long notes, and to project their voices without microphones. They work all the time on their abdominal muscles, particularly the diaphragm muscle which runs along the bottom of the ribcage.

- ☞ Pay attention to your breathing. What part of your body is moving? Place your hands on your stomach just below your ribcage and try to push them out slightly as you breathe in.
- ☞ Keep your hands in place, take a breath in, and say "ha!" You should feel your diaphragm jump.
- ☞ Try to fill your lungs with the biggest breath you can, and let it out as slowly as you can with a hissing sound.
- ☞ Try it again and while you are hissing have a partner count how long you can make the hissing sound or (harder) how long you can make the sound "ahhh." If you were to practice this every day, you would build the muscle and be able to make sound for longer periods of time, as opera singers can.

Every once in a while during the performance, try to pay attention to which passages seem to require the most breath control.

A final toast to merriment and champagne
With thanks to the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre, 2010



ASK STUDENTS:

- Can you think of different kinds of dancing that shocked the "grown-ups" of the time when first introduced? What form of dancing has your vote for the "greatest change in dance form and dance manners"?

Examples:

The Charleston (Flappers)	The Twist	Disco (Bump)
Rock and Roll (Elvis)	Mosh Pits	Hip-hop

- Twenty from what kinds of dances will "the young people" come up with that will shock YOU? Think about positioning, tempo, signature moves...
- Take a guess at what the music of the future will sound like. What are its characteristics? How will you describe it? Will it be used in some form of operetta?



O NASHVILLE
OPERA

die fledermaus

ADULT STUDY GUIDE



presents

DIE FLEDERMAUS

Music by Johann Strauss • Libretto by Haffner and Genée
 from a French vaudeville *Le Reveillon* by Meilhac and Halévy
 First performed at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna, April 5, 1874

Thursday, April 7, 7 p.m. • Saturday, April 9, 2016, 8 p.m.
 Andrew Jackson Hall, Tennessee Performing Arts Center

Directed by John Hoomes
 Conducted by Dean Williamson

Featuring the Nashville Opera Orchestra

CAST & CHARACTERS

Rosalinda	Carla Thelen Hanson*
Gabriel von Eisenstein	Corey McKern
Adele	Lindsay Russell*
Dr. Falke	Kyle Pfortmiller*
Alfred	Richard Troxell*
Frank	Eric McKeever † 2002
Dr. Blind	Todd Barnhill † 2016
Prince Orlofsky	Katherine Sanford † 2016
Sally	Lacy Sauter † 2016
Frosch/Ivan	Brian Russell

* Nashville Opera debut
 † Mary Ragland Young Artist

TICKETS

Nashville Opera, 615.832.5242, nashvilleopera.org
 Available at all Ticketmaster outlets or at 615.255.ARTS

MORE INFORMATION

Contact Nashville Opera at 615.832.5242 or visit nashvilleopera.org.

Study Guide Contributors
 Anna Young, Education Director
 Cara Schneider, Art Director

THE STORY

Doctor Falke is still smarting from a practical joke played on him by his friend Eisenstein. (It seems Eisenstein abandoned him drunk on the street in a bat costume after a masquerade party.) Falke arranges his own masquerade at the palace of Prince Orlofsky at which he hopes to extract his revenge. Eisenstein's crafty chambermaid, Adele, also plots to attend the party. Eisenstein, after receiving his invitation, decides to delay the start of his short jail term (penance for kicking a tax collector in the stomach) and attend the festivities, much to Doctor Falke's delight.

In true farce style, everyone eventually shows up at the party, including Eisenstein's wife, Rosalinda. She arrives

masked and is immediately pursued by Eisenstein. He doesn't recognize her as his wife and plans on making her a new conquest. Much to his dismay, by the end of the night she has not only not been conquered, but she steals Eisenstein's jeweled pocketwatch with which he was trying to tempt her.

After a night of flirting and mistaken identities, everyone ends up at the city jail. The partygoers reveal their true identity. When Eisenstein realizes what a fool he has been, Doctor Falke, "the Bat" announces his revenge is complete.

All is made right and the operetta ends joyously with everyone toasting the "glory and magic of King Champagne."

A SHORT HISTORY OF OPERETTA

While the term "operetta" is sometimes described simply as "light" opera, in reality it is a genre of musical theatre with a developmental history that traces its roots to eighteenth-century *opéra comique* or comic opera. During the seventeenth-century, the opera world was dominated by Italian *opera seria*. Within the *opera seria*, comedic episodes were frequently interspersed within the serious subject matter. Early in the eighteenth-century, this practice was discontinued when comic scenes in serious opera were determined to be inappropriate and not relevant to the plot. However, comic scenes and plots still survived in the opera house.

Operettas were presented in between the acts of the serious opera and were called *intermezzi*. Eventually the plots of the two individual *intermezzi* performed during the intermissions of a three-act serious opera were linked together to form one continuous plot. One example of the merging of two *intermezzi* in this manner is Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona*, written in 1733 and still performed today. This new concept resulted in the development of a distinctly separate operatic form called *opera buffa*.

Opera buffa, the comic opera of Italy, was a reflection of national popular culture and as such it manifested itself in distinct ways when it crossed national borders. The French developed *opéra comique*, the English created the ballad opera. In Germany, comic opera developed as *Singspiel* and in Spain the form was called *Zarzuela*. For all their national differences, they shared many common features: plots that featured common people, less complicated musical style, and spoken dia-

logue rather than sung recitatives (with the exception of Italian *opera buffa*).

By the end of the eighteenth-century, comic opera had become more sophisticated and refined in its subject matter and more musically complex. Eventually, musical innovations found in comic opera, such as the use of the bass voice, multi-character ensembles and ensemble finales were incorporated into serious opera. In the nineteenth-century, French composers experimented with a more lighthearted version of the *opéra comique*, which stressed parody and wit to amuse its audience. This variation of the comic opera became known as the operetta. Composer Jacques Offenbach burst onto the Paris scene in 1858 with his acclaimed operetta *Orphée aux Enfers* (*Orpheus in the Underworld*). This, and his hugely popular subsequent works firmly established the operetta as a separate genre of musical theater.

Offenbach's works had a wide-ranging impact that influenced composers of many other countries. Operetta flourished in Vienna from about 1870 under such composers as Franz von Suppé and Johann Strauss II. The era of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas in England commenced in 1871. Operetta crossed the Atlantic and found a welcoming home. American composers of European ancestry such as Rudolf Friml, Victor Herbert, and Sigmund Romberg continued the operetta tradition in America, and it prospered for many years. Operetta as an art form eventually gave rise to the Broadway musical, which continues today as a unique American contribution to the world of musical theatre.

LISTEN FOR THIS!

Act I

“Turtle-dove, who flew aloft,”

Alfred serenades Rosalinda. His love song begins just as Eisenstein, Rosalinda’s husband, has left. Not only is Alfred a past lover of Rosalinda, but currently teaches her voice lessons.

“Ah, my lady says I can’t” (duet)

Adele regretfully writes to her sister Sally, who invited her to a ball. Adele told her mistress, Rosalinda, a lie that her aunt was terribly sick and she’d need the night off. Rosalinda did not approve the request.

“When these lawyers don’t deliver”

(trio) Eisenstein complains about his upcoming imprisonment. He finds little sympathy from his wife, Rosalinda.

“Come along to the ball” (duet)

Falke invites Eisenstein to Prince Orlofsky’s ball. They scheme to postpone his jail time by a day so he may attend the party, but without Rosalinda knowing of their plot.

“To part is such sweet sorrow” (trio)

Rosalinda bids farewell to Eisenstein, thinking he is on his way to prison.

“Drink, my darling” (finale)

Together, Rosalinda and Alfred toast the memory of their past love affair.

“Good sir, are you accusing me?”

Alfred pretends to be Eisenstein, Rosalinda’s husband, to save her from a social indignity. Frank has come to take Eisenstein to prison and finds Alfred and Rosalinda together instead.

“No, no you set my doubt at rest.”

Frank believes Alfred to be Eisenstein and waits for the “couple” to kiss goodbye before he escorts the prisoner away.

Act II

“What a joy to be here” (chorus)

Party guests sing praises of Prince Orlofsky’s opulent ball.

“From time to time I entertain”

Prince Orlofsky welcomes his guests, telling them to enjoy themselves freely.

“My friends, your kind attention”

Orlofsky brings attention to the confused Eisenstein, who has just accused a guest of being his chambermaid.

Of course, Eisenstein is correct and he has just encountered Adele, dressed in finery. Adele replies with her famous **“laughing song.”**

“How engaging, how capricious” (duet)

Falke, who seeks revenge on Eisenstein, has introduced the disguised Rosalinda to her husband. Eisenstein, immediately smitten, pursues this new conquest, while Rosalinda successfully wins his pocket watch.

“Voice of my homeland”

Rosalinda entertains the party guests by singing a nostalgic song.

“Champagne’s delicious bubbles”

(finale) All guests toast to the king of the party, champagne! Eisenstein toasts his “new” infatuation and the disguised Rosalinda toasts to “a love we never knew before.”

Act III

“Ever since I was a baby”

Adele boasts of her keen ability to play any part well, and that she is suited for an acting career. She pursues Frank, the prison guard, who has been at the party disguised as “Chevalier Chagrin.”

“To judge his expression” (trio)

Rosalinda, Alfred and Eisenstein reflect upon the events of the last evening. Falke arrives with the entire party to declare the triumph of his revenge publically. Rosalinda wants a divorce.

“Oh, Eisenstein, you master-mind”

(finale) Eisenstein has become the punchline of the joke. Although he believed himself to be the clever one, Eisenstein finds the entire ball to be a humorous plot against him. In the end, all ends well and Eisenstein feels compelled to serve his full jail term.

RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS & VIDEO

Label: Naxos Records (1955)
 Conductor: Herbert von Karajan
 Performers: Nicolai Gedda, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Rita Streich,
 Helmut Krebs
 Philharmonic Orchestra & Philharmonic Chorus

Label: Deutsche Grammophon (1976)
 Conductor: Carlos Kleiber
 Performers: Hermann Prey, Júlia Varady, Lucia Popp, René Kollo
 Bavarian State Orchestra, Bavarian State Opera Chorus

Label: Philips Records (1990)
 Conductor: André Previn
 Performers: Wolfgang Brendel, Kiri Te Kanawa, Edita Gruberová,
 Richard Leech
 Vienna Philharmonic, Vienna State Opera Chorus

DVD
 Label: NVC Arts (1984)
 Conductor: Plácido Domingo
 Performers: Kiri Te Kanawa, Hermann Prey, Hildegard Heichele,
 Benjamin Luxon
 The Royal Opera, Covent Garden

DVD
 Label: Opus Arte, BBC (2010)
 Conductor: Vladimir Jurowski
 Performers: Pamela Armstrong, Thomas Allen, Lyubov Petrova,
 Malena Ernman
 Glyndebourne Festival Opera



**Thomas Barrett and Diane Alexander in Nashville
 Opera's *Die Fledermaus*, 2005.
 Photo Marianne Leach**

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Name: Johann Strauss II

Dates: 1825–1899

Nationality: Austrian

LIFE AND CAREER

Johann Strauss II, born October 25, 1825, in Austria, was a composer of light music including dance and operettas. With a body of work containing over 500 waltzes, Strauss earned the fitting title, “The Waltz King.” A great writer of melody, his most popular orchestral piece, “The Blue Danube,” is still frequently performed and has even found its place in television commercials and movies alike.

Johann Strauss II, born into a musical family, desired to follow in his father’s footsteps and become a conductor and composer in his own right. Johann Strauss Sr. did not approve of such goals and felt his son should give up these dreams and become a banker. Nevertheless, Strauss Jr. sought training from the principle violinist of his father’s orchestra, Franz Amon, and took lessons in secret. After discovering this fact, the enraged father whipped his son with the purpose of “wanting to beat the music out of the boy.”

Not until the disapproving father left the family to marry his mistress, Émilie Trampusch, did Strauss II feel free to devote his life to music and composition.

Both Strauss Jr. and Sr. enjoyed success and fame in their lifetimes. However, Strauss II found his acclaim slower than his famous father before him. Many venues were afraid to hire the younger Strauss for fear of angering the father, already a well-known and sought after musician in Vienna.

In 1844, at Dommayer’s Casino in Hietzing, Strauss II debuted his orchestra and was met with overwhelming success from critics. Despite such an encouraging grand opening, Strauss II’s early career proved to be a difficult journey. The young Strauss’ first major position was as the “Kapellmeister” of the 2nd Vienna Citizen’s Regiment.

Estrangement of father and son further developed with the rise of the Revolutions of 1848 in the Austrian Empire. Johann Jr. favored the revolutionaries, angering his father who sided with the aristocracy. The younger Strauss led a public performance of “La Marseillaise,” a kind of revolutionary battle song which later led to his arrest. Later, “La Marseillaise” would become the national anthem of France. On the contrary, Johann Senior composed the “Radetzky March,” in favor of the monarchy; a piece so popular it would prove to be of his most successful compositions.



In 1849, Johann Strauss I died from scarlet fever. Strauss Jr. combined his father’s existing orchestra with his own and began to write compositions favoring the new monarch. This strategic move helped the composer to gain favor once more with the aristocracy.

Johann Strauss II married twice. He wed his second wife, Angelika Dittrich only six weeks after the death of his first wife, singer Henrietta Treffz. The succeeding wife, Dittrich, did not fully support Strauss’ music or career making the match an impossible one. Strauss so fervently wanted a divorce, he withdrew from the Catholic Church, changing not only his religion but also his nationality to acquire one!

Strauss II was admired by several major composers of the time. These contemporaries include: Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss and Johannes Brahms.

Johann Strauss II died on June 3, 1899, after being diagnosed with pleura-pneumonia at the age of 73. Still popular in the repertoire, Strauss II’s compositions continue to be performed around the world and can be enjoyed yearly at the annual Vienna New Year’s Concert.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The music of Johann Strauss remains firmly implanted in the not only Viennese culture but also in American culture as well. Many films have been created based upon the lives of the Strauss Dynasty including: *The Strauss Family* (1972), *The Strauss Dynasty* (1991), *Strauss, the King of 3/4 Time* (1995) and most famously, *The Great Waltz* (1938).

The famous film director Alfred Hitchcock even made a biographical film of Strauss entitled, *Waltzes from Vienna* (1933). Walt Disney created a short film, *The Waltz King* which aired as an addition of the “Wonderful World of Disney” television program in the United States in 1963.

The music of Strauss may be found in animated films and cartoons including several by the Warner Brothers. In fact, the overture of *Die Fledermaus* appears in an episode of Tom and Jerry, entitled, “Tom and Jerry in the Hollywood Bowl” (1950).

The film, *2001: A Space Odyssey* features Strauss’s famous orchestral work, “The Blue Danube,” securing it as a fixture in popular classical standards.

OPERETTAS BY STRAUSS

Die lustigen Weiber von Wien, c.1868
Romulus, c. 1871
Indigo und die vierzig Räuber, 1871
Der Karneval in Rom, 1873
Die Fledermaus, 1874
Cagliostro in Wien, 1875
Prinz Methusalem, 1877
Blindekuh, 1878
Das Spitzentuch der Königin, 1880
Der lustige Krieg, 1881
Eine Nacht in Venedig, 1883
Der Zigeunerbaron, 1885
Der Schelm von Bergen, c. 1886
Simplicius, 1887
Fürstin Ninetta, 1893
Jabuka, 1894
Waldmeister, 1895
Die Göttin der Vernunft, 1897

ABOUT THE LIBRETTISTS

The libretto of *Die Fledermaus* was written by German dramatist Karl Haffner (1804–1876) and German-born author and composer Richard Genée (1823–1895). The story is based on an obscure comedy, *Das Gefängnis* (“The Prison”), by German playwright Roderich Benedix and the vaudeville *Le Réveillon* (“New Year’s Eve”) by the prolific French team of Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, who also created libretti for composers including Jacques Offenbach, Jules Massenet, and Georges Bizet.

JOHANN STRAUSS TRIVIA

Johann Strauss II created over 500 works!

Nicknamed “The Waltz King,” Strauss II was admired by fellow composer Richard Wagner.

Strauss II’s famous piece “The Blue Danube,” is part of the film score to *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Over the decades, the non-singing role of Frosch has become known as the comic highlight of the production.

Die Fledermaus directly translated means “the flying mouse” or “the bat.”



Arnold Rawls and Diane Alexander in Nashville Opera's *Die Fledermaus*, 2005. Photo by Marianne Leach

OPERA ETIQUETTE

ALWAYS BE EARLY!

Please arrive early to ensure you are able to find your seat before the performance begins and before the orchestra tunes. If you are late, you may miss the overture or even the first act!

OPERA IS FOR ALL AGES TO ENJOY!

Opera is full of emotion, passion, human conflict, and discovery. Nashville Opera usually presents operas in their original language and projects supertitles above the stage so the audience can understand every word.

WHAT TO WEAR

Many people think of a night at the opera as a glamorous event and an excuse to bring out the fancy attire. But, it is also acceptable to dress comfortably. For dress rehearsals, the casual attire that students wear to school is perfectly acceptable. A light sweater, jacket, or wrap is suggested because the theater is air-conditioned.

USE THE RESTROOM

Once in the theater it is courteous to remain seated and involved in the production until intermission. Please do not leave the theater unless there is an emergency.

PLEASE BE COURTEOUS...

to everyone in the audience and on stage. Opera is a live performance, so any talking, cell-phone use (including texting) or other noise/light disruption takes away from everyone's experience at the opera. Remember that unlike many staged performances, opera singers do not use microphones. This makes it essential to wait until intermission to unwrap gum/candy, talk to your neighbor or use electronic devices that may distract others. Be sure to turn off cell phone and pagers.

APPLAUSE WELCOME!

There are several times during a performance when it is appropriate to applaud the performers. The first opportunity to applaud takes place when the conductor takes the podium at the very beginning of the performance and when he/she returns to the podium following intermission(s). It is also acceptable to applaud after an overture or aria in the middle of a performance. Applaud when the performance moves you. You may show your appreciation to the performers by shouting "Bravo!" for a male performer, "Brava!" for a female performer, or "Bravi!" for an ensemble. At the conclusion of the performance, singers who performed principal roles in the opera will take their "curtain call." It is appropriate to continue applauding until all singers have stepped forward to accept their applause. Sometimes, audience members are so impressed with the overall performance of the opera, they will stand and applaud the entire ensemble. This is called a "standing ovation."

NO PHOTOS OR RECORDINGS PERMITTED



A SOUND ANATOMY OF OPERA

There are many different kinds of songs in opera. Performers may sing alone, in couples (duets), trios, or larger groups, and there are also moments when no one sings at all—and each composer develops his or her own preferred combinations of these options.

THE OVERTURE

An opera usually begins with an orchestral piece of music called the overture, which functions as an introduction to the opera. Lasting anywhere from five to twenty-five minutes, these opera overtures usually contain important themes from the rest of the production. Before 1800, house lights were not dimmed while the overture played, and audience members continued to talk, drink, and even play cards! This ceased in the 1900's as the overture became a more integral part of an operatic performance. At the end of the overture, the curtain rises and the story of the opera unfolds through a series of scenes. These scenes are organized into acts.

ARIAS

An aria is a solo moment for an opera singer and is usually accompanied by the orchestra. Italian for “air” or song, an aria stops the plot momentarily, giving each character the opportunity to express their innermost thoughts and feelings. These pieces also provide an opportunity for the singer to demonstrate their vocal and artistic skill. Mozart, Verdi and Puccini were able to achieve a remarkable balance between memorable melodies that perfectly suit the human voice while still reflecting the drama of the text.

RECITATIVES

Recitatives, a type of singing unique to opera, help propel the action forward. They can be accompanied either by a full orchestra, or, as is often the case with opera written before 1800, by harpsichord or keyboard instrument. Often introducing an aria, the text is delivered quickly and encompasses a very limited melodic range. It has no recognizable melody and the rhythms follow those of the spoken word.

ENSEMBLE (“TOGETHER”)

Ensemble singing deals with two or more voices of different range performing together. These include duets, trios, quartets, quintets, and sometimes sextets. The composer blends the voices depending on the dramatic requirements of the plot. For instance, a love duet may begin with each performer singing different music at different times, then gradually unifying into harmony. Conversely, the music of a duet may depict conflict. Georges Bizet used this technique in *Carmen*: if you listen to the duets sung by Carmen and Don José, you might notice that their musical lines are never completely blended, and this foreshadows their tragic ends.

CHORUS

Most operas include music sung by a large group of singers (sometimes more than 40) called a chorus. The chorus often appears in a crowd scene and can provide a stunning contrast to solo or ensemble singing. In one opera by Benjamin Britten, the chorus is played by a single male and a single female, as in the tradition of ancient Greek theatre.

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

The orchestra accompanies the singing and introduces the opera with the overture. Musical and emotional themes often appear in orchestral introductions and conclusions to arias, recitatives, and choruses. In many cases, the orchestra plays such an important role, the gravity of its existence is that of a leading character.

ON OPERATIC VOICES

Every voice is unique and no singer gets to choose the category in which they sing but must work with the vocal attributes with which they were born. Composers usually assign a voice type to a character based on his/her personality or age. Read these descriptions for examples.

Women

SOPRANO

This is the highest female voice and has a range similar to a violin. In opera, the soprano most often plays the young girl or the heroine (sometimes called the prima donna), since a high bright voice traditionally suggests femininity, virtue, and innocence. The normal range of a soprano is from middle C through two octaves above middle C, sometimes with extra top notes. Most women are sopranos. The roles of Rosalinda and Adele are sung by sopranos.

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Also called a mezzo, this is the middle female voice with a range similar to an oboe. A mezzo's sound is often darker and warmer than a soprano's. In opera, composers generally use a mezzo to portray older women, villainesses, seductive heroines, and sometimes even young boys. Mezzo-sopranos also often serve as the friend or sidekick to the soprano. The mezzo-soprano's normal range is from the A below middle C to the A two octaves above it. In *Die Fledermaus*, the role of Prince Orlofsky is sung mezzo-soprano.

CONTRALTO

This is the lowest female voice and has a voice similar in range to a clarinet. Contraltos usually sing the roles of older females or special character parts such as witches and old gypsies. The range is two octaves from F below middle C to the top line of the treble clef. A true contralto is very rare—some believe they don't exist at all! There is no featured contralto in *Fledermaus*.

Men

COUNTER-TENOR

This is the highest male voice, which was mainly used in very early opera and oratorio. The voice of a countertenor sounds very much like a mezzo-soprano's voice and they often sing the same repertoire. Like the contralto, true countertenors are very rare. There are no counter-tenors in *Turandot*.

TENOR

This is usually the highest male voice in an opera. It is similar to a trumpet in range, tone, color, and acoustical ring. The tenor typically plays the hero or the love interest. The roles of Alfred and Dr. Blind are sung by tenors. His voice ranges from the C below middle C to the above.

BARITONE

This is the middle male voice and is close to a French horn in range and tone color. The baritone usually plays villainous roles or father-figures. In *Fledermaus*, the roles of Eisenstein and Dr. Falke sung by baritones. The range is from the G an octave and a half below middle C to the G above.

BASS

This is the lowest male voice and is similar to a trombone or bassoon in range and color. Low voices usually suggest age and wisdom in serious opera. The range spans from roughly the F above middle C to the F an octave and a fourth below.



Angela Horn as Orlofsky, Gary Aldrich as Dr. Falke, and Diane Alexander as Rosalinda in Nashville Opera's 2005 production of *Die Fledermaus*. Photo by Marianne Leach

THE ARTISTS



Rosalinda
CARLA
THELEN
HANSON*

soprano
Utah Festival Opera
Seattle Opera
Mobile Opera
New York City
Opera



Eisenstein
COREY
MCKERN

baritone
Nashville Opera:
*The Marriage
of Figaro*
Cinderella
The Barber of Seville
Santa Fe Opera
Opera Birmingham
Florentine Opera
Indianapolis Opera



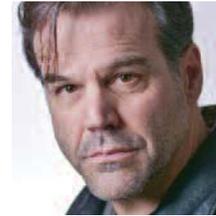
Adele
LINDSAY
RUSSELL*

soprano
Arizona Opera
Portland Opera
Santa Fe Opera
Syracuse Opera



Dr. Falke
KYLE
PFORTMILLER*

baritone
Metropolitan Opera
Opera Carolina
Michigan Opera
Theatre
Florida Grand Opera



Alfred
RICHARD
TROXELL*

baritone
Metropolitan Opera
Los Angeles Opera
Houston Grand
Opera
L'Opera Comique
Vancouver Opera



Frank
ERIC
MCKEEVER

baritone
Nashville Opera:
La Traviata
La Bohème
2002 Mary Ragland
Young Artist
Florentine Opera
Metropolitan Opera
Guild
Opera Naples
Opera Providence



Dr. Blind
TODD
BARNHILL

tenor
Nashville Opera:
Così fan tutte
2016 Mary Ragland
Young Artist
Asheville Lyric Opera
Opera Theatre of
Saint Louis
Miami Summer
Music Festival



Prince Orlofsky
KATHERINE
SANFORD

mezzo-soprano
Nashville Opera:
Così fan tutte
2016 Mary Ragland
Young Artist
Opera Colorado
Hub Opera
Ensemble



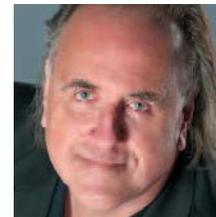
Sally
LACY
SAUTER

soprano
Nashville Opera:
Così fan tutte
2016 Mary Ragland
Young Artist
Heartland Opera
Theatre
Union Avenue
Opera
Indiana University
Santa Fe Opera



Frosch
BRIAN
RUSSELL

actor
Nashville Opera:
*The Difficulty of
Crossing a Field*
*American Stage
Theater Company*
Blackbird Theater
*Nashville Children's
Theatre*
*Nashville
Shakespeare
Festival*



Stage Director
JOHN
HOOMES

Nashville Opera
General & Artistic
Director, 1995–present
Nashville Opera:
Elmer Gantry
Samson and Delilah
Salome
*The Fall of the House
of Usher*
Andrea Chénier
*The Girl of the
Golden West*
*The Difficulty of
Crossing a Field*
*The Man Who Mistook
His Wife for a Hat*
Florentine Opera
Opera New Jersey
Opera Carolina
Arizona Opera



Conductor
DEAN
WILLIAMSON

Nashville Opera Music
Director, 2015–present
Nashville Opera:
Romeo and Juliet
Samson and Delilah
*The Girl of the
Golden West*
*The Difficulty of
Crossing a Field*
Cinderella
*The Man Who
Mistook His Wife
for a Hat*
The Barber of Seville
Arizona Opera
Opera Idaho
Des Moines Metro
Opera
Skagit Opera

* Nashville Opera Debut



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