For over 130 years Regions has been proud to be a part of the Middle Tennessee community, growing and thriving as our area has. From the opening of our doors on September 1, 1883, we have committed to this community and our customers.

One area that we are strongly committed to is the education of our students. We are proud to support TPAC’s Humanities Outreach in Tennessee Program. What an important sponsorship this is — reaching over 25,000 students and teachers — some students would never see a performing arts production without this program. Regions continues to reinforce its commitment to the communities it serves and in addition to supporting programs such as HOT, we have close to 200 associates teaching financial literacy in classrooms this year.

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

From our Season Sponsor

REGIONS

2015-16 Season
for Young People
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
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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.
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)
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.


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.

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?
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
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 dialogue 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.
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.

“Oh, 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.

“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: Placido 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, 20005.
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 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).


**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 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.”
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
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.

**ARIA**
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, villains, 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
Santa Fe 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
Los Angeles Opera
Houston Grand Opera
L’Opera Comique
Vancouver Opera

Alfred
RICHARD TROXELL*
baritone
Metropolitan Opera
Opera Carolina
Michigan Opera Theatre
Florida Grand 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 Theatre 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
TPAC’s mission is to lead with excellence in the performing arts and arts education, creating meaningful and relevant experiences to enrich lives, strengthen communities, and support economic vitality. TPAC Education is funded solely by generous contributions, sponsorships, and in-kind gifts from our partners.

Anonymous
511 Group, Inc.
Adams & Reese LLP
Aladdin Industries Foundation, Inc.
Julie and Dale Allen
Altria Companies Employee Community Fund
AT&T
Athens Distributing Company
The Atticus Trust
Bank of America
Bauch Family Foundation
Best Brands, Inc.
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee
Bonnaroo Works Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Jack O. Bovender Jr.
Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC
Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund
The Broadway League
Brown-Forman
Butler Snow
CapStar Bank
Anita and Larry Cash
Caterpillar Financial Services Corporation
CMA Foundation
Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated
Eva-Lena and John Cody
The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
Community Health Systems
Corrections Corporation of America
Creative Artists Agency
Delek U.S. Holdings
Delta Dental of Tennessee
Dollar General Corporation
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
Earl Swensson Associates, Inc.
East Tennessee Foundation
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Ernest and Selma Rosenblum Fund for the Performing Arts
Ernst & Young LLP
Ezell Foundation
Samuel M. Fleming Foundation
ForceX, Inc.
Gannett Foundation
Joel C. Gordon & Bernice W. Gordon Family Foundation
Grand Avenue
Grand Central Barter
Green Door Gourmet
Landis B. Gullett Charitable Lead Annuity Trust
HCA — Caring for the Community
HCA Foundation on behalf of HCA and the TriStar Family of Hospitals
Martha R. Ingram
Ingram Industries
Ironhorse Farms
JohnsonPoss
Kraft CPAs
Liberty Party Rental
MEDHOST
The Memorial Foundation
Crispin and John Menefee
Metro Nashville Arts Commission
Middle Tennessee Performing Arts
H.O.T. Support Fund
Minuteman Press
Monell’s Dining and Catering
Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation
Nashville Predators Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
The NewsChannel 5 Network
Nissan North America, Inc.
NovaCopy
OnSomble
Patricia C. & Thomas F. Frist Designated Fund*
Premiere Properties Group, LLC
Premiere Speakers Bureau, Inc.
Publix Super Markets Charities, Inc.
Mary C. Ragland Foundation
Raymond James
The Rechter Family Fund*
Regions Bank
Ryman Hospitality Properties Foundation
Sargent’s Fine Catering
Irvin and Beverly Small Foundation
South Arts
SunTrust Bank, Nashville
The Tennessean
Tennessee Arts Commission
Travelink, American Express Travel
Vanderbilt University
Waller
Washington Foundation
Woodmont Investment Counsel, LLC
XMi Commercial Real Estate
Yaara and Uzi Yemin

* A fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee

---

ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the Mary C. Ragland Foundation for support of Nashville Opera’s Die Fledermaus.