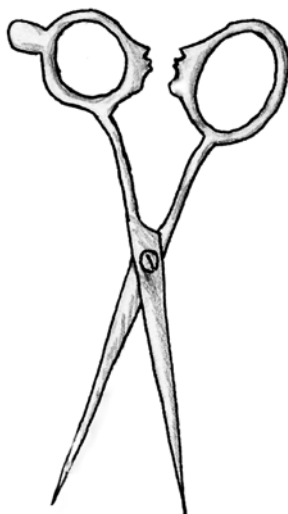


The Barber of Seville



2010 TEACHERPAC

OPERA
iowa

Des Moines Metro Opera's
Educational Touring Troupe



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS



IOWA ARTS
COUNCIL



JOHN DEERE



PRAIRIE MEADOWS

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Dear Music Teacher or Principal,

The OPERA Iowa tour has shaped up very quickly and before you know it we will be on our way to your school and performance site. As our rehearsal period has progressed, it has been a thrill to see these productions come to life! These young professionals will be bringing you wonderful productions of *A Dream Fulfilled: The Saga of George Washington Carver*, *Hansel & Gretel* and *The Barber of Seville*. No matter which opera you will be seeing, I know you will enjoy their fine performances and the charming sets and costumes!

This is your TEACHERPAC for *The Barber of Seville*. You will also receive OPERA Iowa programs based on the number of students/audience members you indicated on the information sheet you returned to us. Please note that the TEACHERPAC includes several classroom activities you can use to help prepare the students for OPERA Iowa's arrival. Although *The Barber of Seville* has a fairly simple plot, the names and situations in which the characters find themselves can sometimes be confusing. Your students may find it helpful if you review the plot and name pronunciations found on page 3 prior to the performance. Familiarity with the storyline and characters will facilitate the success of the OPERA Iowa experience. I hope you find these materials helpful in your preparations.

Also enclosed in your TEACHERPAC are the names and addresses of the OPERA Iowa sponsors. Please take a moment to send them thank-you letters for their support. Letters, drawings and banners from the students are especially welcome. Also, please return the OPERA Iowa evaluation form to me. Your input is important and many of our decisions for upcoming seasons are based on your feedback.

If I can answer any other questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,



Michael Egel
Director of Artistic Operations



Evaluation of Your OPERA Iowa Experience

Your comments are invaluable in helping us plan our programs. After the performance, please ask a staff member who was involved in the day's activities to fill out this form and return it to Michael Egel by mail (Des Moines Metro Opera, 106 West Boston Avenue, Indianola, IA 50125-1836), by fax (515-961-8175) or by email (dmmo@dmmo.org).

Which opera performance did you attend? _____ Date of performance _____

Name of school _____ Your name _____

Position _____ Did you find the classroom activities helpful? _____

What information/changes could we provide for next year? _____

Were the pre-performance workshops appropriate to the age level of the students? Relevant? Entertaining? Educational?

Did you find the advance materials helpful? _____ Appropriate to the age level? _____

Reaction of the students: _____

What is your opinion as to the quality of the production? Scenically? Musically? _____

Reaction of the students: _____

Suggestions for future performances and/or student workshops: _____

General comments and suggestions: _____

May we have permission to print excerpts from your comments in the Summer Festival program? (circle one) Y N Did the local newspaper print anything about OPERA Iowa? Y N (We would appreciate a copy!) Would you be interested in booking similar performances in the future? Y N Contact person _____ Phone _____

Thank you for taking time to fill out this evaluation!

The Barber of Seville

Music.....Giacchino Rossini
 Libretto.....Cesare Sterbini
 English Translation.....Ruth and Thomas Martin
 Music Director.....Michael Sakir

Stage Director.....William Farlow
 Technical Director.....Adam Rager
 Scenery.....Courtesy of Cincinnati Opera
 Costumes.....Ibsen Costumes

Cast of Characters:

Count Almaviva.....Eric Bowden
 Figaro.....Andrew Wannigman
 Rosina.....Diana Stoic/Megan Marino
 Dr. Bartolo.....Benjamin Bear

Berta.....Kristin Titus
 Don Basilio.....Dan Richardson
 Sergeant.....Roland Hawkins

The Setting: The exterior and interior of Dr. Bartolo's home in Seville, Spain.

Synopsis:

ACT I: Count Almaviva has arrived in Seville, Spain, to woo Rosina, a beautiful young woman he has seen and admired from a distance. Rosina is the ward of old Dr. Bartolo, who intends to marry her himself. The Count is aided by his friend Figaro, a local barber, surgeon and busybody. The romantic Count tells Figaro he wants to be loved for who he is, not for his title; so when Figaro arranges a first meeting with Rosina, he tells her that her ardent admirer is a student named Lindoro. Rosina, excited, gives Figaro a love letter, which he dutifully delivers to "Lindoro." He also advises the Count to wear a disguise when he visits Rosina in order to avoid the suspicions of Bartolo.

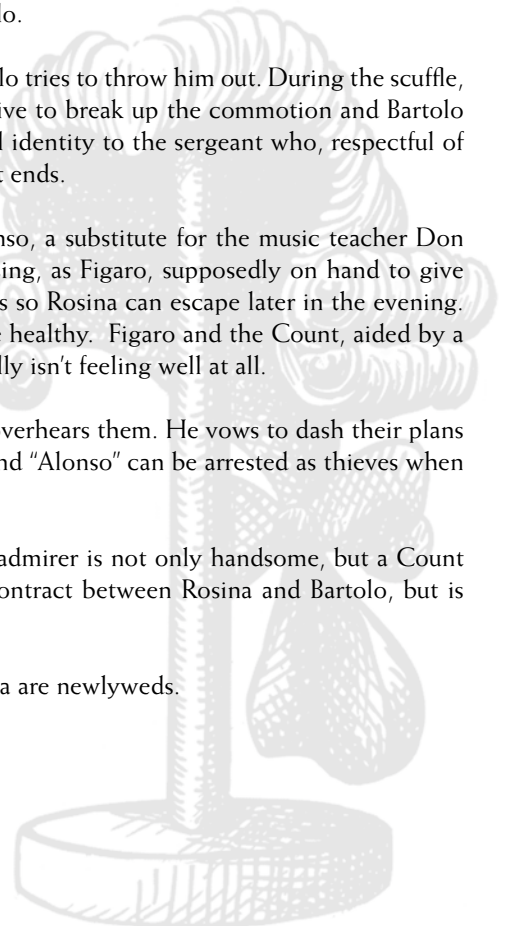
When the Count arrives at Bartolo's house disguised as a drunken soldier, Bartolo tries to throw him out. During the scuffle, the Count manages to pass a love letter of his own to Rosina. The police arrive to break up the commotion and Bartolo demands the arrest of the drunken soldier—but the Count whispers his actual identity to the sergeant who, respectful of the Count's rank, leaves. All express their amazement and confusion as the act ends.

ACT II: Count Almaviva returns, introducing himself this time as Don Alonso, a substitute for the music teacher Don Basilio, who he explains is ill. The Count pretends to teach Rosina how to sing, as Figaro, supposedly on hand to give Bartolo his daily shave, sneaks off to find the key to unlock the balcony doors so Rosina can escape later in the evening. Everything goes well until the supposedly ailing Don Basilio shows up—quite healthy. Figaro and the Count, aided by a handful of money, manage to persuade Basilio that, come to think of it, he really isn't feeling well at all.

The disguised Count and Rosina plan for a midnight elopement, but Bartolo overhears them. He vows to dash their plans by marrying Rosina that very night, and goes off to get the police so Figaro and "Alonso" can be arrested as thieves when they arrive for the elopement.

When Count Almaviva finally reveals his identity, Rosina is thrilled that her admirer is not only handsome, but a Count as well, and agrees to marry him. The notary arrives to sign the marriage contract between Rosina and Bartolo, but is "persuaded" to marry Rosina to the Count instead.

By the time Bartolo returns with the police, it is too late—Rosina and Almaviva are newlyweds.



The following are suggestions to help you make the most of your school's experience with the OPERA Iowa troupe. There are also a few requirements listed for the day the troupe arrives at your school.

1. Discuss with the students the libretto, or story, of the opera they will see. A short synopsis of the opera is enclosed in this TEACHERPAC. The success of the interactive workshops for *The Barber of Seville* is enhanced if students are familiar with the story in advance.
2. Discuss the characters:
 - a. How do the students think they will sound, look, act?
 - b. What do they think the set will look like?
 - c. The costumes?
3. Use the OPERA Iowa program and the other TEACHERPAC materials over several class periods to prepare the students for the opera. Help familiarize them with concepts and musical terminology.
4. Arrange for four adults capable of lifting at least 50 lbs. to help unload, set up and reload scenery. This is critical! You may also choose a "crew" of five or six responsible middle or high school students who could help load, unload and be available to help the technical director put up the set. These students need to be able to follow instructions and will not be able to participate in the workshops. These helpers will be carrying large, sometimes heavy, pieces of scenery as well as bulky lighting instruments.
5. Please contact your school maintenance staff and have someone available when the troupe arrives to answer questions about electrical outlets, etc.
6. Assign 2-3 students to be "guides" for the OPERA Iowa troupe members. These students will be responsible for taking the OPERA Iowa artists where they need to go throughout the day, showing them where the classrooms are for workshops, costume changing areas, the lunchroom, school lounge, and where the coffee is located!



*Classroom
Activities*

Rossini and the World Around Him

What was going on during Rossini's lifetime (1792 – 1868)?

Begin by asking the students what current or historical events happened within the last week. As the students discuss the events, list them on the board. Make a timeline and put the events where they belong in the timeline.

Distribute the biography of Gioacchino Rossini on the next page and ask the class what events might have been going on in the world during his lifetime and while he was writing *The Barber of Seville*. While Rossini was alive, historical events that the students have learned in history class were happening in Europe and the United States. At the same time, music was developing and changing. Each student should create a timeline that will cover the events of Rossini's life, historical events in U.S. history at the same time, and musical events during that time.

After each student has created his/her timeline the class will review their findings. Some students will have found information that other students have not. Once the information has been compared, create a collected version that contains all the information the class thinks is important. Hint: Use the lists below to help guide the students' research and for making further suggestions.

World Events

- 1789 Washington is inaugurated as the first President of the United States; the Bastille is stormed in Paris, initiating the French Revolution
- 1791 The first Ten Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights, are ratified
- 1803 Napoleon agrees to purchase of Louisiana Territory by U.S.
- 1812-15 War of 1812 is fought between the U.S. and the British Empire
- 1815 Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon is defeated
- 1818 "Savannah" becomes the first steamship to cross the Atlantic Ocean (26 days)
- 1825 First public steam railway opens in England
- 1833 Abolition of slavery in Britain
- 1848 Discovery of gold in California
- 1861-65 American Civil War
- 1868 The first parade with floats happens at Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Louisiana

Musical Events

- 1786 *The Marriage of Figaro* premieres in Vienna
- 1791 *The Magic Flute* opens, Vienna. Mozart dies three months later at age of thirty-five
- 1801 German Ludwig van Beethoven composes "Moonlight Sonata" for piano
- 1816 The metronome, an instrument used to measure exact tempo, is invented by Mälzel in Germany
- 1822 Accordion invented in Germany
- 1827 Beethoven dies
- 1833 Composer Johannes Brahms is born in Hamburg, Germany
- 1840 Russian composer Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky is born
- 1853 William Steinway begins making pianos in New York
- 1858 Birth of Italian composer Giacomo Puccini
- 1861 G. Schirmer, the oldest major American music publishing firm, is established in New York
- 1867 Johann Strauss the Younger composes the famous waltz, "The Blue Danube"

Gioacchino Rossini

Gioacchino Rossini was born in the small town of Pesaro, Italy, on February 29, 1792. His mother Anna was a singer with the local opera company and Rossini said of her, "She sang all the time, even when doing household chores." His father Giuseppe was the town trumpeter and an inspector of slaughterhouses. It is not surprising that with such a musical family Rossini began his study of cello, violin, horn and harpsichord at an early age.



Rossini's operatic career was launched at 18, when he wrote a one-act comedy, *The Marriage Market*. By the time he was 21, he had become one of the most popular composers of the day. At the age of 24, Rossini wrote *The Barber of Seville*, which would become one of his best known operas. By the age of 37, Rossini had produced over 38 operas, an average of about five per year. Much has been made of the speed with which he composed. Once, when a duet Rossini was working on fell to the floor, it was easier for him to write a new one than to get out of a cold bed and pick up the one he had dropped, and one of his best known arias, "Di tanti palpiti", became known as the "rice aria" because he wrote it in the time it took his servant to cook rice for his dinner.

Rossini was a handsome young man and very popular with the ladies. He was married twice, both times to opera singers. Rossini also loved to cook and was quite a gourmet, which contributed to his increased size as he grew older. Once a grocer in Paris, when told that his customer was a famous composer, said, "If he knows as much about music as he does about macaroni, he must write beautiful stuff!" Many of his religious works, short songs and piano pieces are sketched on the backs of menus. He once said, "Eating, loving, singing, and digesting are, in truth, the four acts of the comic opera known as life."



Rossini had a gift for being able to compose music to any set of words. "Give me a laundry list and I'll set it to music," he once said. He was devoted to the *bel canto* ("beautiful singing") style of opera, and in addition to his comedies, Rossini is also known for his tragic operas. *Otello* and *The Siege of Corinth* were also popular in their day. His most important serious opera, *William Tell*, was also his last, produced in 1829 at the prime of his popularity. He lived for another 40 years, of which he spent the majority on entertaining guests at his homes in Bologna and Paris. Upon his death, he left much of his estate to musical causes, establishing a music school in Pesaro, the Rossini Prize for singers, and a home for retired opera singers in Paris. Two hundred years later, Rossini's operas are still being enjoyed as the outstanding musical masterpieces they are.

The Internet is a great tool for students to discover opera and to introduce computer activities that can apply to the music student. Hundreds of useful websites are available for browsing, whether you are a new fan of opera or a seasoned operagoer. In addition, everything from the lives of composers to issues facing opera singers today can be accessed via several useful websites. Some of the best include:

www.operastuff.com—Operastuff offers links to almost any kind of information you might need. You can access texts of most operas, biographical information on composers and plot synopses of most major works. In addition, you can browse a great deal of information on singers (current and not current, famous and up-and-coming), opera companies, opera performances in your area and training programs for young opera singers. Operastuff also maintains a chat room where you can visit about anything pertaining to opera!

www.classicalsinger.com—Drawn from the *Classical Singer Magazine*, this site presents information that is helpful to singers. In addition to audition information, Classical Singer allows singers to communicate with each other about many issues through a posting forum.

www.operaamerica.org—Opera America is a service organization to the field of opera, particularly American opera companies. This site offers information and support opportunities to administrators, technical and musical personnel in the opera world.

www.metopera.org—The world's most famous opera house maintains a site that includes synopses, performance schedules, information on historic singers and links to opera companies throughout the world.

www.operaglass.com—A multipurpose opera site that also links to privately maintained opera sites.

www.desmoinesmetroopera.org—Des Moines Metro Opera's website is a great way to find out what's going on with the Company. Plus you'll find useful information on our mainstage opera performances during the 37th Festival Season in Summer, 2009.

A WEB SCAVENGER HUNT

Using the websites listed above, have your students answer the following questions about opera.

1. Who wrote the opera *Tosca*? *Giacomo Puccini*
2. In what year was Maria Callas born? *December 2, 1923*
3. Name two opera companies that are located in Florida. *Orlando Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Pensacola Opera*
4. *The Barber of Seville* was originally written in what language? *Italian*
5. Name two operas by Giuseppe Verdi. See page 12
6. What opera will the Metropolitan Opera present on the night of April 23, 2010? *Der Fliegende Holländer*
7. How much is the most expensive individual ticket at the Lyric Opera of Chicago? *\$207.00*
8. What three operas will Des Moines Metro Opera present in the summer of 2010? *The Marriage of Figaro, Macbeth, Susannah*
9. Identify two composers who wrote operas during the twentieth century. See page 12
10. Who wrote the opera *Carmen*? *Georges Bizet*
11. List three operas originally written in French. *Manon, Carmen, The Tales of Hoffmann, Werther, Faust, Romeo et Juliette*
12. Name the librettist (text author) of *The Marriage of Figaro*. *Lorenzo da Ponte*
13. List two roles that were sung by Dame Joan Sutherland. *Lucia, Norma, Olympia, Marie, Violetta*

Opera Tradition

An opera, like a play, is a dramatic form of theatre that includes scenery, props and costumes. However, in opera, the actors are trained singers who sing their lines instead of speaking them, and are accompanied by an orchestra. A conductor coordinates both the singers on stage and the instrumentalists in the orchestra pit.

Opera consists of many dimensions that are combined to make it a unique whole: the human voice, orchestral music, the visual arts (scenery, costumes and special effects), drama (tragedy and comedy), and occasionally dance. The melding of these elements can produce tears of joy or sadness, create laughter or anger, but most importantly transport you to another land of song and music.

Opera originated in Florence, Italy, in the late 1500s, with a small group of men who were members of a "Camerata" (Italian for "society"). The intellectuals, poets and musicians of the Camerata decided they wanted words to be a featured aspect of music. They used ancient Greek drama as their inspiration, including the use of a chorus to comment on the action.

The Camerata laid down three principles for their new art form:

—The text must be understood; the accompaniments must be very simple and should not distract from the words.

—The words must be sung with correct and natural declamation, as if they were spoken, and must avoid the rhythms of songs.

—The melody must interpret the feeling of the text.

The first significant composer to fully develop the ideas of the Camerata was Jacopo Peri (1561-1633) whose opera *Dafne* was performed in 1594 and is regarded as the first opera.

Operas are divided into scenes and acts that contain different types of vocal pieces for one or many singers. An aria is a vocal solo that focuses on a character's emotions rather than actions. A recitative is sung dialogue or speech that occurs between arias and ensembles.

Composers write the score or the music for the opera. Sometimes the composer will also write the text of the opera, but most often they work with a librettist. The story of the opera is written as a libretto, a text that is easily set to music. In the past, the libretto was also bound and sold to the audience. Today, the audience can easily follow the plot with the use of supertitles. Supertitles are the English translation of the libretto projected onto a screen above the stage.

Many people question the difference between an opera and a musical like *Les Misérables* or *The Phantom of the Opera*. There are many differences. For instance, the musical style of opera is usually classical and complex, while musicals feature pop songs and sometimes rock and roll. Also, singers in musicals have microphones hidden in their costumes or wigs to amplify their voices. The voices of opera singers are so strong that no amplification is needed—even in a large theatre. Furthermore, operas are almost completely sung, while the use of spoken words is more common to musicals. It is interesting to note, there are some operas with spoken words and these are called singspiels (German) and Opera-Comique (French). Examples are Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Bizet's *Carmen*.

Attending an OPERA Iowa Performance

Let's take a look at what traditions are associated with audience behavior:

Listening—At performances of artistic music (symphonies, operas, ballets, etc.), it is especially important to be very quiet. Talking, whispering, rustling programs, or even coughing while the music is being performed is very distracting to other audience members and to the performers. Help everyone enjoy the performance by being on your best listening behavior.

Applauding—As for applause, the performers love it. During the opera, applause is appropriate after duets, solos, and choruses. Sometimes the verbal cheer "Bravo!" is appropriate if you think the performer has done an extra good job. Feel free to show your appreciation of the performers with enthusiastic applause.

Recognizing the Artists—Following the performance, each singer is recognized again as they take a bow. The conductor (for OPERA Iowa, this person is called the Music Director) is also given special treatment at an opera performance. He or she is the last to be acknowledged and is applauded by the audience and often the artists as well. If an orchestra is used, the conductor will acknowledge the orchestra members by shaking the hand of the first chair violinist, who is referred to as the concertmaster. Individual members of the group are asked to stand and are acknowledged by applause if they played an important part especially well. Quite often the entire group is asked to stand.

Programs—Most performances have a printed program listing the music to be performed, usually given to you when you enter the hall. An opera program looks like the program for a play, with a list of acts and scenes, and a short phrase about the setting, the time and place of the opera. Opera programs often contain a synopsis of the story.

What to Wear—The tradition that members of the audience wear tuxedos and long dresses to music performances has long since passed in most places. As an audience member, you should feel comfortable about what you are wearing. For evening concerts, a coat and tie or a dressy outfit is just fine to wear.

Knowing what is expected of you as an audience member before you attend an opera will make the experience truly enjoyable.

Composers and Their Works

This is a listing of a few well-known composers and some of their works.

BORN - DIED

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1567-1643 | Claudio Monteverdi
<i>The Coronation of Poppea</i> |
| 1685-1759 | George Frederick Handel
<i>The Messiah, Julius Caesar</i> |
| 1685-1750 | Johann Sebastian Bach
composed many pieces of Baroque music |
| 1756-1791 | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
<i>The Marriage of Figaro, Così fan tutte, The Magic Flute and Don Giovanni</i> |
| 1770-1827 | Ludwig van Beethoven
<i>Fidelio</i> and many symphonies and sonatas |
| 1792-1868 | Gioacchino Rossini
<i>The Barber of Seville, La Cenerentola</i> |
| 1797-1848 | Gaetano Donizetti
<i>Lucia di Lammermoor, Don Pasquale and The Elixir of Love</i> |
| 1809-1847 | Felix Mendelssohn
<i>Elijah</i> and many other oratorios |
| 1813-1901 | Giuseppe Verdi
<i>Falstaff, La Traviata, Aida and A Masked Ball</i> |
| 1813-1883 | Richard Wagner
<i>The Flying Dutchman and The Ring Cycle</i> |
| 1819-1880 | Jacques Offenbach
<i>The Tales of Hoffmann and Orpheus in the Underworld</i> |
| 1826-1864 | Stephen Foster
<i>Oh! Susanna and My Old Kentucky Home</i> |
| 1858-1924 | Giacomo Puccini
<i>La Boheme, Tosca and Turandot</i> |
| 1864-1949 | Richard Strauss
<i>Salome and Der Rosenkavalier</i> |
| 1898-1937 | George Gershwin
<i>Rhapsody in Blue and Porgy and Bess</i> |
| 1913-1976 | Benjamin Britten
<i>Peter Grimes, Gloriana and A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> |
| 1918-1990 | Leonard Bernstein
<i>Candide and West Side Story</i> |

Musical & Theatrical Terms

A CAPELLA	Without accompaniment.
ALLEGRO	A fast tempo.
APPOGIATURA	A short note either a step above or below the real note, added as an ornament.
ARPEGGIO	A scale that skips every other note.
BEAT	In music, a regular pulse, or unit of time.
BRAVO	Audience members shout this approval meaning "well done". BRAVA may be used if the performer is female, or BRAVI if intended for more than one artist, but BRAVO as an exclamation is appropriate for all occasions.
BLOCKING	The basic movement pattern of the performers on stage.
CADENZA	A passage that sounds improvised and one that is performed by a soloist.
CANTATA	A vocal composition in several movements, for soloists, instrumentalists, and chorus, that is based on a religious or sometimes a secular text.
CHORUS	A group of singers who sing and act together; also a piece of music sung by such a group of singers.
CHORUSMASTER	The leader of the chorus.
COLORATURA	A highly decorative singing style with many flourishes, trills and complex figures woven around it, usually for the soprano voice.
COMPOSER	One who creates musical works.
CONDUCTOR	One who leads and coordinates a musical ensemble.
COUNTERPOINT	Note against note. A style of music in which more than one melody can be heard at a time.
CRITIC	One who describes and analyzes artistic works and performances, also judging their merits and faults.
DOLOROSO	Doleful or sad.
ENSEMBLE	Together. The delicate quality of singing together in tonality and emotional contact.
FINALE	The ending. Usually a grand scene involving some recapitulation of the music and action, and involving as many members of the cast as possible.
FORTE	Loudly.
FORTISSIMO	Very, very loudly.
FERMATA	A note that is held one and a half times its normal length; the second to the last note of an aria.

Continued on next page...

GESTURE	A movement of the limbs or bodies of the characters. Gesture helps the music explain the inner feelings of the characters.
GIOCOSO	Playfully, happily.
GRAND OPERA	Opera in the grand manner, signified by grandeur and size in cast, orchestra and sets.
HARMONY	Two or more tones (vocal or instrumental) sounding at the same time
LEGATO	A smooth manner of playing or singing, with no perceptible breaks between notes.
LENTO	A very slow tempo.
LIBRETTIST	Author of a libretto.
LIBRETTO	The text of an opera (the Italian word for <i>little book</i>).
METER	In music, a pattern of rhythmic pulses, indicated by a time signature. In poetry, recurring patterns of syllabic stresses within a line.
OPERA BUFFA	A comic opera with elements of farce.
OPERA SERIA	A dramatic opera, usually dealing with serious or historical subject matter.
ORAL TRADITION	The process in which music is preserved by people hearing the music, remembering it, and then performing it for someone else.
OVERTURE	An instrumental introduction, that often makes use of thematic material from the body of a work.
PIANO	Softly.
PRIMA DONNA	"Leading Lady" in opera, or the characteristic of considering oneself the chief soprano.
PROPS	Articles, other than costumes or scenery, used as part of a dramatic or operatic production (short for PROPERTIES).
RECITATIVE	A style of singing designed to be similar to the natural inflections of speech.
SCENE	The surroundings or location where the action takes place; also a subdivision of an act.
SCORE	The pages upon which all the vocal and instrumental music of an opera is written.
STACCATO	A very short note.
SUPER	Slang for an extra. A person used in crowd scenes, a nonsinging, nonspeaking actor (short for SUPERNUMERARY).
SYNOPSIS	A short summary of the opera's story.
TECHNICAL	The stage management, lighting, and scene building aspects of a theatrical production.
TEMPO	The speed at which a piece of music is performed.
THEME	A central melody in a piece of music. In opera, a theme may be associated with a particular character, setting, object, or emotion.
TIMBRE	Tone quality or tone color of a voice or instrument.
VIBRATO	Vibrating. Slight and rapid fluctuations in pitch. The quality that produces warmth in the human voice.

*Des Moines
Metro Opera
History*

Our History



DMMO's offices are located in the historic Carnegie building in Indianola.

Now celebrating our 38th season, Des Moines Metro Opera was founded in 1973 by Maestro Robert L. Larsen, the Company's Artistic Director, and the late Douglas J. Duncan, who was named Managing Director. The early success of the Company is a tribute to the visionary leadership of these two men. In recognition of his artistic leadership, Maestro Larsen was awarded the prestigious Iowa Arts Award by the Iowa Arts Council.

In the Company's early years, staff consisted primarily of volunteers—opera-lovers who gave freely of their time and talent—so that the meager budget of \$22,000 could be invested in the productions. But as

productions and budgets grew, so did the need for a professional staff. In 1976, Jerilee Mace joined the company as an assistant to Mr. Duncan. In 1988, following Mr. Duncan's unexpected death, Ms. Mace was named to the position of Executive Director. In 2005, when Ms. Mace announced her retirement after 30 years of service, a nationwide search was undertaken to find her replacement. That search culminated in the appointment of Thomas Smith as the Company's Executive Director and CEO, who served until the position was restructured in 2009. Robert Montana now serves as the Managing Director and Michael Egel as the Director of Artistic Operations.

Over the past three and a half decades, Des Moines Metro Opera has grown from what was once regarded as a "\$22,000 project" into one of the nation's most renowned regional opera companies. With an annual budget of \$2 million, DMMO now ranks as one of the largest performing arts organizations in Iowa.

The James M. Collier Apprentice Artist Program was initiated in 1975. This Summer Festival program provides talented young American artists a coveted opportunity to gain professional experience in an educational environment. Each year 40 young singers are selected from hundreds of nationwide auditions to participate in this tuition-free program. The seven-week program includes classes in all aspects of the professional development of an opera singer.

Apprentice Artists work with professional coaches and directors on scenes and one-act operas which they perform in free public concerts each season. The apprentice program is an invaluable resource to the Company, as well as to the artists involved. In a beneficial reciprocal arrangement, apprentices receive seven weeks of intensive, comprehensive operatic training while the Company receives the benefit of their combined talents to form the core of its nationally recognized Festival chorus for each season's performances.



World-renowned baritone Sherrill Milnes gave a series of masterclasses during the 2009 James Collier Apprentice Artist Program.

From 1985 to 1989, DMMO undertook several important initiatives, including expansion of the orchestra pit at Blank Performing Arts Center to accommodate up to 100 musicians, production of the world premiere of Lee Hoiby's *The Tempest*, and the initiation in 1987 of OPERA Iowa.

OPERA Iowa, Des Moines Metro Opera's innovative educational touring troupe, has been tremendously successful and has helped raise the visibility of the Company statewide, nationwide and worldwide. In 1992, OPERA Iowa spent two weeks in Iowa's Sister State in Japan, performing *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* for approximately 4,000 students in 10 middle schools and 2 high schools as well as a community concert in Kofu City. In the spring of 2000, OPERA Iowa traveled to Iowa's Sister State in China for a similar residency. OPERA Iowa has also traveled to Minnesota, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Kansas, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and Montana. Each year OPERA Iowa performs for approximately 25,000 to 35,000 students in nearly 100 performances. Since its inception, OPERA Iowa has presented over 1,000 performances of 16 operas and 3,900 classroom workshops for over 500,000 students and adults worldwide.



The summer repertory season includes three operas, consisting of both standard and contemporary repertory. The 2010 Summer Festival runs June 25 through July 18 and features Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Verdi's *Macbeth*, and Floyd's *Susannah*.

Des Moines Metro Opera's home theatre is the Blank Performing Arts Center located in Indianola, Iowa. It is a unique, intimate "theatre-in-the-half-round" that seats 488 people, where audience members can sit no more than 12 rows from the stage. Due to audience demand, the total number of performances has been increased from

eight in 1983 to the current sixteen. Des Moines Metro Opera periodically performs in the 2,750-seat Civic Center of Greater Des Moines. Productions staged at the Civic Center include *Aida* in 1984, the 1991 holiday production of *Hansel & Gretel*, the January 1998 production of *Tosca* and the January 2001 production of *La Bobème*. In December, 2003 and 2005, DMMO staged a special holiday presentation of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* at the beautiful Hoyt Sherman Place Theatre.

For over three decades of spectacular growth and accomplishment, Des Moines Metro Opera has adhered to the philosophy set forth at its inception:

PRODUCE opera as a living art form through performance and composition.

OFFER a stage for American-trained principal artists.

PROVIDE a high caliber apprentice artist program that provides greater than average opportunities to perform and to participate.

DEVELOP regional audiences of all ages through educational outreach programs.

"Larsen's dual role [as conductor and stage director] results in stagings which are never at odds with the singing, but serve to enhance and clarify the music in a logical and dramatic manner."

—Opera News

*Follow-up
Activities*

Musical Crossword Puzzle

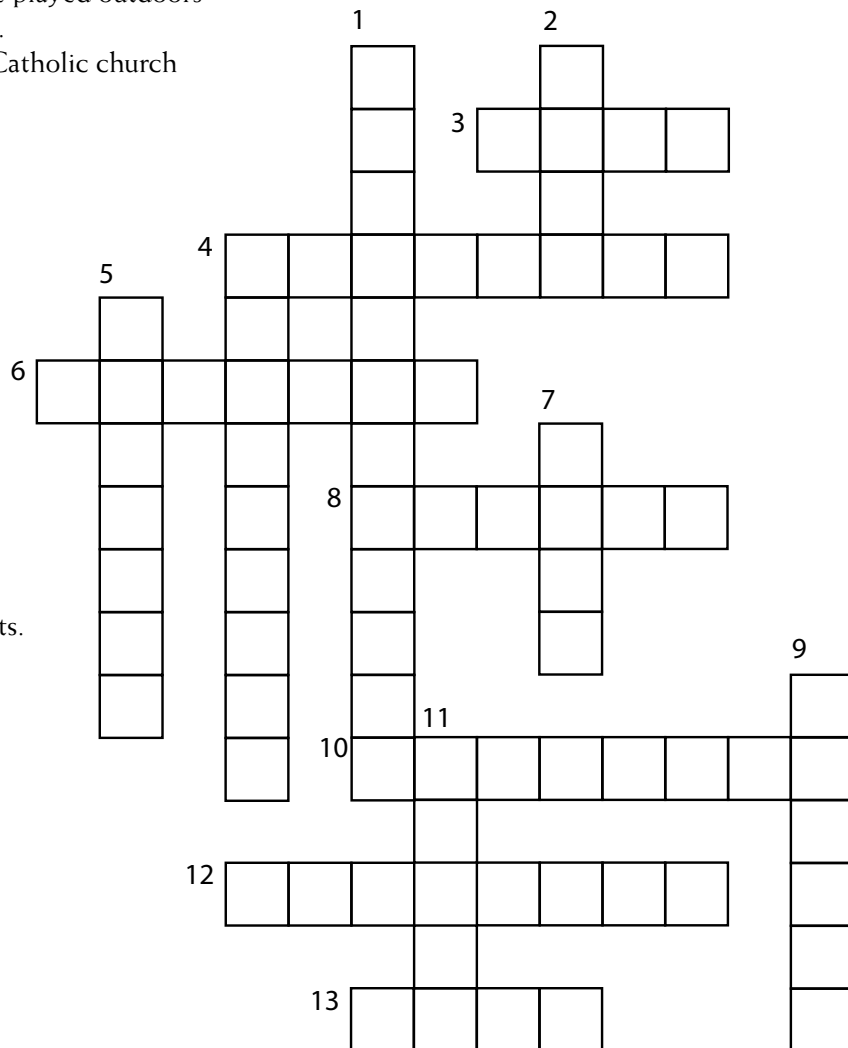
Types of music created by opera composers include *opera*, *aria*, *minuet*, *singspiel*, *sonata*, *symphony*, *serenade*, *concerto*, *mass*, *chamber music*, *duet*, *trio*, *quartet*, and *quintet*. Use these words to solve the crossword puzzle and to learn about these different types of musical pieces.

ACROSS:

- 3. A song, usually from an opera, sung by one person.
- 4. A large-scale orchestral piece, usually in four separate movements.
The first and last are usually quick, the second slow, and the third is often a minuet.
- 6. A piece of chamber music for five instruments.
- 8. A courtly dance, used for short piano pieces or as one section of a symphony.
- 10. A piece often in three movements for a solo instrument and orchestra intended to show off the soloist's technique. They are usually written for piano or violin, but Mozart wrote for some wind instruments, too. The first and third movements are fast and the middle one slow.
- 12. A piece for instruments or orchestra in many movements intended to be played outdoors for evening entertainment.
- 13. A musical setting for the Catholic church service, in Latin.

DOWN:

- 1. Pieces for a small but varied group of instruments, each playing an individual part.
- 2. A piece of chamber music for three instruments.
- 4. "Song-play," an opera in German, with spoken dialogue between songs.
- 5. A piece of chamber music for four instruments.
- 7. A piece for two instruments.
- 9. A piece for one or two instruments in several movements.
- 11. A play set to music, usually in several acts.



Thinking About the Opera

1. Listen to the overture of *The Barber of Seville*. Have each student write a synopsis of the story based solely on his or her impression of that music. Be sure to have them include in the synopsis a connection between the various musical elements of the story's characters. Then, in a group setting, discuss the differences in the students' versions of *The Barber of Seville*.

2. Have the students read the synopsis of *The Barber of Seville*. You can use the synopsis found on page 3, or most CD versions include a synopsis and often the libretto. You can choose to read it aloud to the students or have them read it silently. Stop to discuss. Discussion topics might include:

- What makes this opera a comedy?
- Are the actions of the characters realistic?
- What makes this opera a parody?
- How does this opera portray men and women?
- What is Sterbini (the librettist) trying to say about love?

3. For a more dramatic approach, read the libretto as a reader's theatre, having students take turns speaking the different roles. If done in this manner, ask the students to put emotion into their voices and encourage exaggeration. You might have to start them off, but this will provide an interesting way of reading the story.

4. Convert the synopsis into an improvised play. Have students create the dialogue between the characters at key points in the story. The students may also want to improvise present day situations similar to those in the opera. For example: A young couple encounters unreasonable obstacles in their effort to get married. This situation can be treated as a comedy (as in *The Barber of Seville*), but has often been treated as a tragedy (such as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*). What subtle differences are there between a comedy of this sort and a drama?



Questions for Class Discussion

Here are some questions you might ask the students to help them reflect on the performance:

1. What is opera buffa?
2. Before the bel canto revival, the Italian operas of the early 19th century were often dismissed as vehicles for "canary fanciers" or as "concerts in costume." They were believed to have little dramatic value. Is that true of *The Barber of Seville*? Is the story there just to provide occasion for pretty music? Does the music truly serve the story?
3. How was *The Barber of Seville* first received by the public? How popular is it today?
4. Count Almaviva poses as a drunken soldier to gain access to Bartolo's house. Can you think of any other plays or operas where a character poses to be someone or something else to play a trick on someone?
5. *The Barber of Seville* has been composed as an opera three different times. If you were asked to create a fourth version, what changes would you make?
6. Imagine the full life of each character. Identify external and internal elements of each character. Make creative, interpretive choices about the life of each character. Have the students write a short story about a day in the life of one of the characters.
7. During Rossini's time, opera was the chief source of entertainment. Television and movies were yet to be invented and if people wanted to see stories acted out, they had to go to the opera. Rossini's operas were eagerly anticipated. Some were well received while others failed at first but became successes later. What differences can you cite between 1790 and today in the way we are entertained? Is there a difference between art and entertainment?
8. In 1822 Rossini visited German composer Ludwig van Beethoven in his home. Beethoven commented, "Ah, Rossini, the composer of *The Barber of Seville*. My congratulations; that is an excellent opera buffa. I have read it with pleasure and I enjoyed myself. It will be played so long as Italian opera will exist." The meeting was brief and Rossini, who had to communicate his sentiments in writing as the great composer was already deaf, expressed his admiration for Beethoven and departed. On recalling his visit with a friend, Rossini remarked, "When I descended those dilapidated stairs, I could not repress my tears." Why does Rossini feel this way and make this statement?
9. The following is a quote by Rossini regarding his method of composing overtures: "Wait until the evening before opening night. Nothing primes inspiration more than necessity, whether it be the presence of a copyist waiting for your work or the prodding of an impresario tearing out his hair. In my time, all the impresarios of Italy were bald at 30..." What does this mean? Give three reasons and support each.
10. In the synopsis, Figaro describes himself as a "factotum". What does this mean, and what does he mean by describing himself in that way?

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After OPERA Iowa Leaves...

Please, please, please send thank-you letters, colorful drawings, postcards, or other interesting works of art to the donors listed below whose support has helped bring OPERA Iowa to your school. These sponsors have told us the letters of appreciation they receive from students and teachers mean a great deal to them. Sending a few letters to each sponsor works better than sending dozens of letters to one or two sponsors. For your convenience, address labels have been enclosed.

We like to get these at our office, too. We share them with troupe members and include examples when we apply for future OPERA Iowa funding. The troupe members also like to receive mail sent by the students they have met on the tour.

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Attn: Georgianna Paul
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BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURE IN IOWA!

Cultural programs like OPERA Iowa are important to this great state. Please send a letter to Iowa's U.S. Senators and Representatives in Washington, DC, to tell them how much you've enjoyed OPERA Iowa. In the midst of budget cuts, it is crucial that these individuals be made aware of how valuable your experience was and that you believe in federal and state support of the arts. In 1995, five student letters were read into the U.S. Congressional Record as part of the National Endowment's request for renewed funding.

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