



 OPERA Iowa
InfoPac

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The Coons Foundation

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The Gabus Family Foundation **IOWA ARTS COUNCIL** NATIONAL ENDOWMENT **for the ARTS**
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS arts.gov

WELCOME!

Thank you for your interest in the OPERA Iowa program! As one of Iowa's largest and most expansive arts education programs, we know that it will provide your students with an incredible opportunity to connect with and learn about opera.

This year, we will be featuring Malcom Fox's audience favorite, *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* for our school residencies. This delightful production takes you around the world as Sid explores different musical styles to find one that is just right for a singing serpent.

We recommend that you review this InfoPac for all the basic information about your OPERA Iowa school residency. It should answer most questions you have including information about our typical schedule and how the workshops portion of the program happens. If you find yourself in need of assistance, please give us a call at 515-961-6221 or email Bridget Anderson at banderson@dmmo.org.

We cannot wait to visit your community and students and look forward to all that the 2024 tour has in store!

FAQ

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN AN OPERA IOWA SCHOOL RESIDENCY? The OPERA Iowa residency includes two classroom workshops for smaller groups and a performance of *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* for a large audience. Each residency is planned to take half of a school day.

HOW MUCH DOES A SCHOOL RESIDENCY COST? The half-day residency costs \$595. If you are booking the school residency in a bundle with other performances, you receive a small discount on each piece of your bundle.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE OPERA IOWA SCHOOL RESIDENCY? We recommend the workshops for grades 3-5. The performance of *Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing* is appropriate for K-5 audiences. We have seen entire schools come together for performances, but have also done performances for a smaller section of a school or a single grade for larger districts.

HOW DO I BOOK A SCHOOL RESIDENCY AND PERFORMANCE OF SID THE SERPENT WHO WANTED TO SING? Please fill out the [Performance Request Form](#).

Before the Performance

BOOK YOUR PERFORMANCE DATE After you have read through this packet, begin the booking process by filling out the [Performance Request Form](#). DMMO staff will then reach out to confirm an available performance date and add you to the tour schedule.

SIGN YOUR CONTRACT AND PAY YOUR DEPOSIT Shortly after booking your performance date, you will receive a contract and invoice for deposit. Returning your signed contract and deposit will confirm your spot on our tour calendar.

VIRTUAL OPERA CURRICULUM In January you will receive the Virtual Opera Curriculum with preparatory materials and classroom lessons for your students. The curriculum includes songs that students can sing along with the artists during the performance, videos to learn some of the basics of opera, and many classroom activities for all ages of students. You can use as much or as little of the curriculum as your schedule allows. We highly recommend teaching your students the songs from the show!

ADVANCE SHEET We will send out Advance Sheets in January to collect specific information about your visit (this is previously the Info Sheet). This will include details for our technical staff so they know what to expect on arrival and how many students are attending the workshops and performances.

NEWSPAPERS A couple of weeks before your performance, you will receive a souvenir newspaper for your performance. This includes some fun facts about the performing artists and activities for the students. You can choose to distribute them in advance to get students excited about the performance or send them home the day of the performance to share with parents.

FINAL PREPARATIONS DMMO staff will reach out about a week before your performance to confirm final details. Please pay careful attention to this communication to update any last minute changes.

FAQ

WHAT DATES ARE AVAILABLE? The 2024 tour will run February 26-April 26. Please contact us to find out what dates are currently available.

HOW MUCH IS MY DEPOSIT? The deposit for a school residency is typically \$100. The rest of the residency fee is due 30 days before the performance.

WHAT WILL I NEED TO KNOW TO FILL OUT THE ADVANCE SHEET? This sheet will ask for logistical information for your residency so our crew can be prepared for your residency. It includes information for load in (where to park, doors to be used, size of stage), workshops (where they will be, age and number of students), and the performance (number of students, type of space).

HOW DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY NEWSPAPERS TO SEND? We use the information you provide on your Advance Sheet to determine the number of newspapers you will need, so it's important to return that to us!

WHAT IF I NEED MORE NEWSPAPERS? If you find you are a few newspapers short, please let us know as soon as possible. We can either send you more in the mail or have the troupe deliver them the day of your residency.

About the Opera

Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing was written by British composer Malcolm Fox for the New Opera of South Australia in 1975. As a former elementary and secondary music teacher, Fox designed *Sid* to be used as a teaching tool on singers, opera and terminology while also entertaining audiences with its delightful music and cast of colorful characters. This show emphasizes the value of individual expression and teaches the importance of accepting people for who they are.

STORY

The circus can be a fun and exciting place...unless your only job is to slither. Such is the plight of Sid, a serpent in the circus who sees his friends happy in their much more interesting jobs and yearns for a better one of his own. Deciding he wants to sing more than anything, Sid leaves the circus in pursuit of a style for his new career. His adventures take him on a musical journey around the world—taking voice lessons in Rome, singing in a barbershop quartet in London and joining a rock band in New York. After “trying and failing at everything,” Sid finally finds his way back to the circus, where his friends help him realize he has been singing in his own style all along.

CAST

Sid the Serpent

TENOR

Clown

SOPRANO

Juggler

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Strongman

BASS

PRODUCTION

Music

MALCOLM FOX

Libretto

SUSAN AND JIM VILÉ

Music Director

CONNOR BUCKLEY

Stage Director

JOSHUA BORTHS

Technician

TBA

Scenic Designer

ROBERT SUNDERMAN

Costumes by

TBA

Performance Day

CHECKLIST

- On-site coordinator** (this may be you) to answer any questions.
- Custodial staff** for questions concerning power sources to the performance site and to help unload/load and set up scenery. (1 hour when troupe arrives and 1/2 hour before troupe leaves.)
- Stage crew:** At least four (4) adults, each capable of lifting at least 50 pounds, to help load and unload scenery from DMMO vehicles. Five (5) or six (6) responsible high school students aged 15 and older may also assist with the load-in and load-out if an adult is provided to supervise their activities.
- Performance space:**
 - An auditorium, theater, gym or cafeteria that is at least 25 feet wide by 15 feet deep with an overhead clearance of at least 13 feet.
 - Two (2) 20-amp circuits.
 - Wi-Fi access.
 - Floor and/or chair seating for students/audience members.
- Additional spaces:**
 - At least two (2) dressing rooms (restrooms reserved for DMMO are acceptable).
 - An area that is secured where personal belongings can be stored (office or lockable room).
 - If workshops are being presented, two (2) spaces (classrooms, music room) separate from the performance space that can accommodate the workshop groups.
- A **tuned piano** for the performance.
- Meals for the troupe:** Morning schools are asked to please provide lunch for seven (7) troupe members.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

8:15-8:30am or **12:15-12:30pm:** Arrival at school (met by **On-site Coordinator** and **Building Custodian**).

8:15-9:45am or **12:15-1:45pm:** OPERA Iowa Technical Director/**adult volunteers** set up scenery.

8:45-9:15am or **12:45-1:15pm:** Workshops with OPERA Iowa troupe members.

9:15-9:50am or **1:15-1:50pm:** Troupe members prepare for performance.

9:50-10:00am or **1:50-2:00pm:** **Introduction to the Performance workshop** for audience.

10:00-10:40am or **2:00-2:40pm:** Performance.

10:40-10:50am or **2:40-2:50pm:** Question and Answer session (if time allows).

10:50-11:30am or **2:50-3:30pm:** OPERA Iowa Technical Director/**adult volunteers** reload scenery.

What if this schedule doesn't work for my school? The schedules above may be varied slightly to accommodate your school schedule. Please contact us if you would like to make any changes.

Workshops

LET'S MAKE AN OPERA (recommended for up to 60 students)

Meets Music Core Standard 7.2: Perceive and analyze artistic work

Meets Theatre Core Standard 1.1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

OBJECTIVE To provide a framework that will enhance students' understanding and appreciation of musical performances by:

- Exploring musical forms and the composition of an opera.
- Introducing, identifying and evaluating music and its elements.
- Engaging the students in a verbal review of the forms used in the creation of an improvised scene.
- Demonstrating that variation of musical form and production elements elicits a response to the action on stage.

REQUIREMENTS Piano, whiteboard, supervising teacher(s)

SINGERS AND VOCAL STYLES (recommended for up to 60 students)

Meets Music Core Standard 7.2: Perceive and analyze artistic work

Meets Music Core Standard 4.2: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation

OBJECTIVE To assist students in their abilities to describe, analyze and develop precise thoughts about varying styles of music by:

- Identifying different musical and vocal styles.
- Exploring how cultures influence musical and vocal styles.
- Developing active listening skills.
- Developing analytical skills inspired from what is heard.

REQUIREMENTS Whiteboard, supervising teacher(s)

INTRODUCTION TO THE PERFORMANCE (for the entire audience before the show)

Meets Music Core Standard 6.1: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work

Presented in the performance area 10 minutes before opera begins.

OBJECTIVE This workshop prepares students to be active listeners in the audience by:

- Discussing different musical themes.
- Identifying characters and story line.
- Exploring how the music illustrates characters and actions.
- Rehearsing participatory chorus music.

REQUIREMENTS Piano, microphone, students must be in place 15 minutes before performance time

FAQ

How do the workshops work? Each of the two workshops last about 30 minutes. They are presented concurrently in separate spaces from 8:45-9:15am or 12:45-1:15pm.

Where will the workshops happen? Each workshop must be in spaces other than the performance space (that space is loud and distracting as the set is going up). We have workshops in music rooms, cafeterias, libraries, etc. We just need enough space for the students and about 5'x5' for the artists to move around a little.

How many students can be in each workshop? The workshops are designed for smaller groups of students (about 60 or fewer) if possible so they have a more personalized interaction with the artists. However, we have had groups as large as 75-100 work well depending on student behavior and staff support from the school.

After the Performance

You can help Des Moines Metro Opera by sending a few thank you letters, colorful drawings, postcards, or other interesting works of art to our leading corporate supporters. Sponsors have told us that letters of appreciation from students and teachers mean a great deal to them. We also include these examples when we apply for grants which support OPERA Iowa in the future. We love to see these in our office as well. The OPERA Iowa troupe members especially like to receive mail sent by the students they have met on the tour.

You can send your thank yous to Des Moines Metro Opera by mail or email, and we'll take care of the rest!

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After the Performance

BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR ARTS AND CULTURE IN IOWA!

Why? Because cultural programs like OPERA Iowa are important to the state of Iowa. Please send a letter to your local Representative, Congress member or Senator to invite them to support arts and culture in Iowa. Your input is invaluable to helping maintain the level of support Iowa currently invests into the arts. Past letters from grateful OPERA Iowa students were included within the U.S. Congressional Record as part of the National Endowment for the Arts' request for renewed funding.

To contact your Iowa State Representative or Senator to share your support of programs like OPERA Iowa, visit:

WEBSITE: <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators>

PHONE: 515-281-5129, Legislative information office

To contact Iowa's elected leadership to encourage continued support of arts funding to programs like OPERA Iowa:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/contacts/federallinks>

Senator Charles (Chuck) Grassley

135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-3744
<http://www.grassley.senate.gov>

Senator Joni Ernst

260 Russell Senate Office Building
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Phone: 712-352-1167
<http://www.ernst.senate.gov>

District 1: Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks

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