

2019/20 Season

# LA OPERA

## Education and Community Engagement



A SCENE FROM LA OPERA'S 2016 PRODUCTION OF *THE MAGIC FLUTE*. (PHOTO CREDIT: CRAIG T. MATTHEW / LA OPERA)

# Opera Prep



TEACHER MATERIALS &  
**Participation Guide**

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## Working at LA OPERA

Opera Prep combines the opportunity to see one of LA Opera's productions with a special **behind-the-scenes experience**. This program offers students a deep, meaningful encounter with one of the many **careers** that bring the productions to the stage and a chance to see how a show is fine-tuned while watching many of the professional artists, technicians and managers in action. People attending the dress rehearsal are there by special invitation. Some are coming for the first time and some are serious opera connoisseurs. We are privileged to be able to offer your students and chaperones this amazing opportunity. An opera audience observes certain etiquette, and we hope this guide will help you prepare so that your group feels right at home.

This guide is intended to support you in bringing students to LA Opera and assist you in creating a lesson plan. Information to assist you includes an overview of how an opera season is designed, an explanation of a working dress rehearsal, and what to expect on the day of the rehearsal, focusing on the **conventions** an opera audience observes. You will find a list of resources at the back of this guide to use in creating your original lesson.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

 *Pelléas et Mélisande* is Debussy's only opera – he is well known for his chamber, symphonic, and piano works.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

 *La Bohème* was the inspiration for the well-known rock musical, *Rent*. Jonathan Larson's *Rent* is set in modern-day New York City instead of Paris.

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A SCENE FROM THE DAVID MCVICAR PRODUCTION OF *PELLEAS ET MELISANDE* (PHOTO CREDIT: RICHARD CAMPBELL)

## Designing an Opera Season:

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### DID YOU KNOW?

 The interior of the theater features 78 crystal light fixtures made with 24,000 individual pieces of crystal.

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There are no rules for putting together an opera season. Like a well-rounded meal, there should be a mix of “flavors” including favorite works and well-known pieces. Every opera company is different, but here is one possible scenario. A typical season might include eight productions. Of those eight, two operas might be new productions, two or three might be “remounts” or revivals of pieces the company has produced before, two more could be rentals from other companies, and one may be a presentation of another artistic group’s work.

**New production** — This is either a completely **original work** or a new production of an existing opera with all new sets, costumes, direction, and design. Often a company will collaborate with one or more opera companies to **co-produce** the work. International collaborations are not uncommon. Each company carries some of the cost and presents the work in its own theater.

**Remount or revival** — Once a company has created its own **signature version** of an opera, it becomes part of its library and remains an option to be staged during future seasons.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

 There are over 400 English captions projected for each performance.

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**Rental** — As the name suggests, this is a production that is **part of another company’s library** and can be rented from that company. The sets and costumes are then shipped from the home company to the new destination. This could be as close as a neighboring city or as far as a country across the globe. While the company renting the work can cast whomever they want, they are obligated to offer the creative staff (the director and designers) from the home company first option to fill those positions during the mounting of the opera at the new location.

**Presenter** — An opera company may act as the presenter of **another group’s work**.

*There are many things to consider when making these choices. What is the cost of renting a show? How far do the sets need to be shipped? Have the different opera audiences and styles of opera been considered? Is there an appealing mix of the new and the familiar? How many performances of each show will be presented? When was the last time your local audience saw this production? Perhaps you can come up with a few questions of your own.*

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### DID YOU KNOW?

 In an entire season, 25 pounds of foundation makeup are used.

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## What is a Working Dress Rehearsal?

Whether an opera is an original LA Opera production, a co-production with one or more companies, a rental from another company, or a revival or remount of an LA Opera production, each production must be adjusted for the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion stage. While each department works independently to learn and produce their aspect of the show, it takes tremendous coordination and financial resources to run through the show with everyone involved.

The final working dress rehearsal is the last time all the elements of the production are brought together before the **opening night performance**, and the final opportunity for the **staff** and **cast** to make adjustments to the on-stage performances, orchestration, sets, costumes, lighting, and other technical aspects of the opera. When you attend a dress rehearsal you will see some of the artistic, production and administrative staff stationed behind computers and other equipment in the seats in front of the orchestra. Occasionally they may stop the performance to give **notes** to the singers, coordinate with the orchestra conductor, or address a **staging** or technical concern.

Another characteristic of a working dress rehearsal is that the singers sometimes **mark** portions of their vocal parts. This means the singer may not sing out completely through the entire rehearsal. This could be because he or she wants to preserve his/her voice for opening night. In most cases, however, if the dress rehearsal is open to the public, the singers treat the occasion as a performance for the audience present.



A SCENE FROM THE STEPHEN LAWLESS STAGING OF *ROBERTO DEVEREUX*. (PHOTO CREDIT: CORY WEAVER)

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

📖 Light walkers are volunteers who take the place of principal singers in early technical rehearsals so the crew can adjust and set the lighting design for an opera production. It takes patience and endurance to remain still for the long periods of time required to be a light walker. “Light walking is my favorite thing to do here. It’s so much fun to stand on that stage and imagine yourself for a moment as actually being in the opera — but not have the pressure of really performing.”  
— LA Opera volunteer.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

📖 *Roberto Devereux* will be a company premiere and the role of the Duke of Nottingham will be portrayed by Plácido Domingo.

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## Who Are the People Working Behind the Tables?

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### DID YOU KNOW?

📖 The theatre rigging system holds 152,000 pounds of scenery.

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On the day of the dress rehearsal, the staff sits in the theater and monitors the performance. Each department is responsible for specific aspects of the production but there are basic skills that are important for everyone:

**Time management** — planning well and using time efficiently to accomplish ones goals

**A strong work ethic** — the desire to work hard and do well in one’s job

**Lifelong learning** — continued study in one’s chosen field

**Creative thinking** — the ability to solve problems as they arise

**Artistic staff** — This includes the production director and the artistic planning staff. They act in a supervisory role, in case something goes wrong and a problem needs to be solved.

**Stage director and assistant director** — The stage director is responsible for the dramatic interpretation of the opera. He or she will give notes to the assistant director about anything that needs to be changed and will refer to the notes in communicating with the performers.



**Production stage manager** — The production stage manager communicates all the cues throughout the production including lighting changes, the movement of set pieces and when the performers enter and exit the stage.

**Lighting designer and assistant lighting designer** — As with the

directors, the lighting designer oversees the lights and gives notes to the assistant lighting designer, who is also communicating with the follow spot operators. There are usually two or three lighting interns observing this process.

**Costume staff** — The costume director and wardrobe assistants are present to make any last-minute costume adjustments.

**Music staff** — Because the conductor is working in the orchestra pit and cannot tell how the orchestra sounds from outside, one or more music assistants are seated in the theater to monitor the sound and balance from within the house. The music librarian and his or her assistant are present to take any notes from the conductor. If the conductor wants to make any changes in the musical scores, the music staff collects the scores from the orchestra and makes the changes on each score by hand before the final performance.

**Effects and Animation** — If the production has special visual effects, there will be staff to oversee those elements as well.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

📖 Mozart was 30 years-old when he composed the music for *The Marriage of Figaro*.

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### DID YOU KNOW?

📖 Maestro James Conlon can receive real time updates on the volume and balance during rehearsal through a coded light system.

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(ABOVE) SET MODEL FOR *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO* BY SANTO LOQUASTO



## VISITING LA OPERA

### ARRIVING

Below you will find details about your upcoming visit to LA Opera. Please read them carefully, as we address many of the concerns or special circumstances you may have.

If you are attending the career event talk, please plan on arriving approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes before the performance begins. This will give you enough time to park and walk to the location of the pre-performance event. After the buses unload, LA Opera staff and volunteers will direct you to the pre-opera event location. Those arriving by car will be given advance information about where to meet your escort.

**TRAVELING BY BUS** — Buses will unload on Hope Street. Bus parking is ultimately up to security, and while buses are often allowed to remain in the valet area, your driver may be asked to drop you off and return for pickup. Buses picking up at the end of the opera should return ½ hour before the opera concludes to allow enough time to safely park the bus and prepare to load. Buses will not be allowed to unload or park on Grand Avenue.

**TRAVELING BY CAR** — If traveling by car, you may park in the Music Center garage entering on Grand Avenue. There is a \$9 per-vehicle charge for parking.

**TRAVELING BY METRO** — If traveling by Metro, take the Red Line to the Civic Center/Grand Park station.



A SCENE FROM THE KOMISHE OPER BERLIN PRODUCTION OF *LA BOHEME*. (PHOTO CREDIT: IKKO FREESE/DRAMA\_BERLIN.DE)

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## BEFORE THE SHOW

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**FOOD** — Unfortunately, we are unable to provide food for our guests. You may bring meals with you or purchase food once you have arrived.

**Bringing food** — If you are bringing box meals with you, or arriving early to purchase food, you are welcome to bring your food to the pre-opera event. Food will not be allowed in the main theater space. Pizza is an easy option to eat on the plaza before the pre-talk event.

**Having food delivered** — If you would like to arrange for box lunches for you students, we can connect you with Patina catering who can usually arrange for a simple box lunch with a sandwich, chips and a beverage, to be delivered to the rehearsal room at a cost of about \$17 per person.

**Purchasing food after arriving** — There are restaurants within walking distance, both sit-down and take-out, including a Subway. There is a grab-and-go burger restaurant called Upstage Burger located on the plaza of the Music Center. A burger, fries, and a soda cost about \$13 total.

**ENTERING THE OPERA HOUSE** — The first people you will encounter when you enter the opera house are the house staff, consisting of the house manager, head usher, ushers, volunteers, and the box office. The house manager is in charge of organizing the house staff and takes care of the theater. The head usher directs the other ushers in their individual jobs. The box office takes care of all ticket sales.

**House manager** — It is the job of the house manager to oversee the smooth running of the theater before, during and after the show. Theater house managers typically organize and coordinate ushers before a performance. They also deal with unclaimed tickets and lines at the box office. The house manager also ensures that the lobby is quiet during the performance and determines a late seating policy.

**Head usher** — The head usher is in charge of all the ushers involved in seating a show. This includes ushers scanning tickets, controlling the elevators, giving directions, renting binoculars, handing out programs, and showing patrons to their seats.

**Ticket takers/scanners** — These are ushers who scan tickets before the patrons enter the theater. They may also help direct patrons to their seats.

**Usher** — An usher escorts people to their seats in a theater.

**Box office** — The box office staff deals with all ticketing. They work closely with the house manager during a performance so that the house manager knows the total number of seats occupied that night.

**BEHIND THE SCENES** — Most of the pre-show events will take place in the rehearsal rooms of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Signs and staff will direct students, teachers, and chaperones to the appropriate location where they will gather to hear about one or more aspects of working for LA Opera. Here are some possible pre-opera events:

**Members of the LA Opera orchestra** could talk about the skills necessary to build and maintain a career as freelance musicians and what it takes to play in the LA Opera Orchestra, including learning the music, rehearsals, performance responsibilities, and maintaining rehearsal and work schedules.

**Members of the LA Opera artistic staff** could discuss putting together an opera season, casting mainstage roles as well as supernumeraries and chorus members, and working with LA Opera’s Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program.

**Members of the LA Opera production staff** could relate what it takes to run a show.

Students are encouraged to ask questions and interact with the presenters. After the “behind the scenes” conversation, attendees will be escorted back to the lobby of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, where ushers will help them find their seats.



STUDENTS ATTENDING A PRE-TALK/CAREER CONNECTION WORKSHOP SNAP A PICTURE WITH MAESTRO JAMES CONLON

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**IN THE  
THEATER**

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**WHAT TO WEAR** — You can never dress too nicely for the opera, and while this doesn't mean you need to wear a tuxedo, suit, or gown, you should do your best to look as though you have dressed for the occasion. You can dress up or down, but make sure you wear something that makes YOU feel comfortable. Most opera-goers you'll see will be wearing business attire. Think of your "Sunday best" or perhaps something you would wear when visiting your relatives for a holiday.

**BEING SEATED** — Each individual will need a ticket to enter and be seated in the opera house. You will receive your tickets when you arrive. Each person should have a ticket in hand when entering the theater and sit in the seat for which they have been ticketed.

**Arrive on time** — Rehearsals start promptly! Latecomers and those who exit during the performance will not be admitted to the auditorium until an appropriate interval, and at the discretion of the ushers.

**Finding your seat** — Ushers will direct you to your seating area. Please sit together as a group, with chaperones dispersed throughout.

**Restrooms** — There are restrooms located on the Grand Avenue side of the theater on every floor except the lobby/orchestra level. There are additional restrooms downstairs beneath the lobby/orchestra level. Teachers or chaperones must accompany students at all times.

**Special needs** — We will make special seating arrangements for those with physical challenges. Contact LA Opera Education and Community Engagement department at 213-972-3157 for assistance.

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**THE CONVENTIONS  
OF AN OPERA  
AUDIENCE**

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This dress rehearsal is not open to the public. You, your students, and chaperones will be sitting with invited guests, such as board members, donors, volunteers, guests of the artists, and other VIPs, who have expectations about appropriate opera behavior. It is important for your students AND chaperones to understand the conventions of an opera audience. Conventions are the agreed-upon or understood ways of behaving. Opera is a unique art form and, unlike musical theater, a rock concert, or some other kind of public performance, there are appropriate ways to show your enjoyment and respect.

Make sure to turn off your cell phone and/or other electronic devices. Please do not use electronic devices **at any time, including texting**, as the light from the screen is disruptive to other patrons. Please no photography or recording devices.

Sit quietly in your seat. Out of respect for the other opera-goers, please don't whisper, talk, eat, or open candy wrappers. Do not prop feet on theater seats. Do not eat or drink anything inside the theater.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

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📖 LA Opera's *Eurydice* is a world premiere for composer Matthew Aucoin and librettist Sarah Ruhl.

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When the lights dim in the theater, it is time to settle and get ready for the performance. Applaud to welcome the conductor when you see him or her enter the orchestra pit.

Opera always begins with tuning. The oboist will play the note "A." You will hear all the other orchestra musicians tune their instruments to match the oboe's "A."

One important difference between opera and some other art forms is that there is no amplification, and the building is acoustically designed to carry sound efficiently. It is appropriate to wait to applaud until the conclusion of a song. This might mean the orchestra is still playing softly after the singers have finished, or even that the emotion of the song is still lingering in the air and the audience is enjoying the moment. If you are unsure when to clap, it is always safe to wait and see how the rest of the audience is reacting.

There will be "supertitles" projecting English translations above and to the sides of the stage to help you understand what is happening during the opera.

Show appreciation when the opera is over by calling out "Bravo!" to thank the performers for a job well done.

Find different things onstage or in the orchestra to focus on. Students will want to follow the action onstage and the progress of the story, but you may also suggest that they watch the orchestra and the conductor, or make a point to observe the lighting, scenery, and costumes.



MATTHEW AUCOIN IS THE COMPOSER AND CONDUCTOR OF *EURYDICE*. (PHOTO CREDIT: CRAIG MATTHEW)

## PREPARING FOR OPERA

### What guests should know and do before they arrive:

**The story of the opera** — To guarantee a successful experience for your students and chaperones, make sure they know the entire story. For your students, you should cover this as part of your lesson plan. It is up to you whether or not you would like to integrate the opera lesson into your regular curriculum. It is a good idea to give your chaperones a sense of the lesson you will be teaching your students so they are on the same page. You might give them a copy, e-mail an outline or present it in a meeting.

**The conventions of opera** — Opera has certain codes of behavior the audience members should observe. Please make sure your students AND chaperones understand what they are.

**Where to go and what to expect** — Make sure that your students and chaperones know how the event is going to unfold. Students will need to be with a chaperone at all times.

**Survey** — Please have your students complete the pre- and post-survey online.

**Food** — There will most likely be people eating during pre-opera event. We don't want your students to have to watch others eat and not have food until after the event. Please refer to page 6 for suggestions.

### Student–Chaperone Ratio

This program is **intended for students**, but we realize we will need to be flexible, as most of the performances are at night and teachers may rely on parents for transportation. Because every situation is different, it is up to the teacher to determine what they feel is an appropriate ratio. Whatever you decide, please address your thinking in your chaperone guide. Chaperones must be with the group and not arrive later than the students.

You will need:

**A minimum of one chaperone for every ten students**  
**A maximum of one chaperone for every one student**

## Educating your chaperones

Don't assume that every adult has been to the opera. It is your responsibility to communicate the story of the opera they are seeing, as well as the conventions of opera. How you choose to communicate this to your chaperones is up to you. You might recruit a "lead chaperone" to help organize a meeting. You could invite a member of our Community Educators to visit your chaperones and give a presentation. We recommend you create a packet of information about the opera and a list of expectations and send it home. Chaperones could be invited to the classroom for one period to participate in some activities with the students.

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**INFORMATION  
TO DISCUSS  
WITH  
CHAPERONES**

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### What is Opera Prep?

Please briefly describe the opera prep program, including:

- why you have chosen this opera
- the story of the opera
- how you are preparing the students
- sharing your lesson plans

### Responsibilities as a chaperone:

- be familiar with the story of the opera
- understand their role in transportation
- understand how many students they will be responsible for
- monitor student behavior
- know what action to take if there is a discipline problem
- understand the policy for intermission
- know where to meet if they or someone else is separated from the group
- be prepared to escort students to and from restrooms



A SCENE FROM THE STEPHEN LAWLESS STAGING OF *ROBERTO DEVEREUX*. (PHOTO CREDIT: CORY WEAVER)

## Student lesson plan guidelines

There is no “best way” to create the perfect lesson plan. A good lesson plan will teach the opera, making sure students understand the story and have a sense of the art form itself. If you are integrating the opera into your curriculum studies, make sure you teach the opera as well as the literature, science, and history you need to address. We require AT LEAST one lesson but if you feel you need more time to accomplish your goals, we welcome multiple lessons.

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### SAMPLE STUDENT LESSON FORMAT

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## Objectives

- Clear title/topic for the lesson plan
- Indication of which grade(s) and subject(s) the lesson plan is targeting
- Indication of the time needed for the lesson plan
- Clear goals and evaluation of what the students will be able to achieve/do/understand after the lesson plan
- Reference to Common Core and Visual and Performing Arts Standards

## Materials

- List of supplies and equipment needed
- Attachments (activity sheets, graphs, etc.)
- Homework (learning outside the classroom)
- References (books, periodicals, audio, video, web, etc.)
- Include if applicable innovative ways of teaching the lesson (e.g. PowerPoint presentation with moving images)

## Procedures

- Clear process and/or step-by step procedures with a time frame for each element, when appropriate
- Connections to relevant art forms in opera — music, theater, dance, and visual arts as well as across the core curriculum, as appropriate
- Active learning (involves active participation, creation of student products such as writings, drawings, performance, etc.)
- Critical thinking component (asks students to reflect more deeply on issues and to make connections via self-discovery)
- Relating opera themes to current and relevant issues

## Assessment and evaluation

- Learning measurement tools, such as pre-/post-test, quiz, writing assignment
- Ideas for further student self-learning (websites, community resources, etc. to help encourage students to further their studies)
- References to current LA Opera productions
- Adaptations for special considerations in your classroom (ELL, Sp. Ed., Differentiated Learning)



## Resources

### Websites

#### LA OPERA

<http://www.laopera.org/>

You can find synopses of productions a library of audio and video clips including podcasts, recommended recordings, and opera lesson plans.

#### THE ARIA DATABASE

<http://www.aria-database.com/>

A diverse collection of information on over 1000 operatic arias. Designed for singers and non-singers alike, the Database includes translations and aria texts of most arias as well as a collection of MIDI files of operatic arias and ensembles.

#### ALL THE GREAT OPERAS ... IN 10 MINUTES

A very funny short film

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pH\\_rm2ukE8g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pH_rm2ukE8g)

#### OPERALIA

<http://www.operaliacompetition.org/>

Official website for Plácido Domingo's World Opera Competition.

#### OPERA AMERICA

<http://www.operaamerica.org/>

A non-profit organization supporting the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera.

#### OPERA BASE

<http://www.operabase.com/>

An astonishingly huge opera resource, providing news and reviews, a searchable data base of schedules and links. Many sections available in multiple languages.

#### OPERA GLASS

<http://opera.stanford.edu/main.html>

Home of the "Operaglass List", where people around the world have contributed their opera synopses, libretti, performance histories and more.

#### OPERA MAGAZINE

<http://www.opera.co.uk/>

The world's leading opera magazine online.

#### OPERA NEWS

<http://www.operanews.com/>

News and highlights direct from The Metropolitan Opera Guild.

#### OPERA STUFF

<http://operastuff.com/>

Database of opera houses, singers, links and more.

#### OPERISSIMO

<http://www.operissimo.com/>

The world's most complete and constantly updated opera and concert database.

## Glossary of Opera Terms

<b>Acoustics</b>	The science of sound; the qualities of sound in an enclosed space
<b>Aria</b>	A solo song a character uses to express feelings or comment on the story
<b>Baritone</b>	The middle male voice; often cast as kings, priests, and villains
<b>Bass</b>	The lowest male voice; often cast as comic roles and older men
<b>Bravo</b>	Italian meaning “well done”; opera tradition calls for the audience to shout “bravo!” at the end of an excellent performance
<b>Choreography</b>	A dance or the making of a dance; some operas include dance sequences
<b>Chorus</b>	A group of singers usually divided into sections of sopranos, mezzo-sopranos, tenors, and basses; the opera chorus often represents the general community, comments on the story, and sometimes voices the thoughts, fears, and suspicions of the audience
<b>Composer</b>	The person who writes the music of an opera or other musical composition
<b>Conductor</b>	The musical director of the opera, who leads both the orchestra and the singers
<b>Contralto</b>	The lowest female singing voice
<b>Cover</b>	A replacement for a singer in case of illness; an understudy
<b>Director</b>	The person responsible for the dramatic interpretation of an opera
<b>Duet</b>	A song for two voices
<b>Dynamics</b>	The degree of loudness and softness in the music
<b>Grand Opera</b>	Popular from the 19th century through the present, grand opera combines chorus and ballet with other elements of spectacle
<b>Ensemble</b>	A French word that means together; a group performing together
<b>Finale</b>	The ending segment of an act or scene, often very lively
<b>Leitmotif</b>	A recurring musical theme, often a short melody (but also can be a chord progression or rhythm), associated with a particular person, place, or idea
<b>Libretto</b>	The text of an opera; literally, “a little book”
<b>Librettist</b>	The person who writes the libretto

<b>Mezzo-Soprano</b>	Middle-range female voice
<b>Musical</b>	A staged story told by interweaving songs and music with spoken dialogue
<b>Opera</b>	A play which is sung
<b>Opera Buffa</b>	A comedic style of Italian Opera that dominated the early 18 <sup>th</sup> century
<b>Opera Seria</b>	The noble and “serious” style of Italian opera that rivaled the less-serious Opera Buffa
<b>Orchestra</b>	The group of musicians who, led by the conductor, accompany the singers
<b>Orchestra Pit</b>	The sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestra plays
<b>Overture</b>	An introduction to the opera played by the orchestra
<b>Play</b>	A staged story told through spoken dialogue
<b>Plot</b>	The story or main idea
<b>Proscenium</b>	The architectural “frame” of the stage space; the areas hidden from the audience’s view behind the proscenium are called the “wings”
<b>Recitative</b>	A sung speech that moves the action along by providing information
<b>Score</b>	The written music of the opera or other musical composition
<b>Set</b>	The structures, furniture, and decoration on stage
<b>Solo</b>	Music sung by one performer
<b>Soprano</b>	Highest female voice
<b>Tempo</b>	The speed of the music
<b>Tenor</b>	Highest male voice; young men and heroes are often tenors
<b>Trio</b>	Three people singing together; a song for three people
<b>Verismo</b>	Realism in opera; <i>Tosca</i> is an example of opera verismo
<b>Zarzuela</b>	Popular Spanish opera style that mixes dialogue with music, similar to American musical theater

## Behind the scenes — jobs at the opera house

Opera is one of the most popular forms of art in the world and is growing in popularity in the United States — particularly among young people. The combination of spectacle, music, and drama continues to thrill audiences even today. Opera is truly an international art form. While each company has its own orchestra and chorus, or group of singers, opera companies all over the world share opera productions (the sets and costumes of opera), and singers travel all over to sing the roles that made them famous. But there is more to opera than famous singers, orchestra and spectacle. Many people work hard behind the scenes to make each opera performance happen. Opera companies employ administrators and production personnel who are responsible for the productions you see. Students might wish to explore these careers in the arts. Here are some professions at an opera company that might interest you or your students.

### Conductor

Many opera companies have their own resident conductor but invite guest conductors to conduct specific operas. Conductors are accomplished highly trained musicians, who play several instruments and read music with the fluency of their native language. Not every conductor wants to conduct opera; conducting for the voice is a highly specialized skill. Conductors also specialize in different kinds of music; some conductors are known for early music, others specialize in composers, like Mozart or Rossini, while some are skilled in conducting contemporary or new music. **James Conlon, Richard Seaver Music Director**, is LA Opera's resident conductor. The conductor usually has an **assistant** who accompanies in rehearsals. A **chorus master** works with the chorus, conducting them in rehearsals and supervising them while they learn the music.

### Stage director

The director is responsible for the overall concept of the production, for the performers' interpretations of their roles, and for moving the action on the stage. Directors are usually hired for a specific production, and again, they specialize in different styles. Opera directors often work internationally. The director often works with an **assistant** who, among other duties, takes staging notes during rehearsals.

### Set designer

The set designer works closely with the director to create the look of the opera. The director determines where and when the opera will take place (many directors choose to update operas to a more recent time period), and the designer will sketch the locations. He or she might do this after extensive research. A set designer must know a great deal about construction and materials, for the set must be created to be lightweight, sturdy, and practical. He or she must also know about lighting, for the colors of the set must work with the lights illuminating the stage.

### Costume designer

The costume designer works closely with both the director and the set designer to create the costumes for every character in the opera. The costume designer will draw his or her ideas for each character. **Costume constructors** build (or sew) the costumes. Some characters change their costumes many times — a young girl in Act I may be portrayed as an old woman in Act III — and the designer must develop specific details, down to the kind of fabric to be used, for each costume.

### **Lighting designer**

The lighting designer must be knowledgeable about electricity, color, and theater techniques to create a design that will work for the opera. A lighting designer must be a good draftsman, for he or she will draw the “light plot,” or a rendering of every light to be used and its placement in the theater. The lighting designer creates mood, atmosphere, and locale through the clever use of light and color.

### **Technical director**

The technical director oversees all the technical aspects of the company’s production. She or he works with the designers and with the stage crew to make sure the sets, props, and lights are effective and work together.

### **Costume director**

The costume director supervises all aspects of costumes and works with the costume designer to make sure all requests are met. This person also supervises construction of costumes or arranges to buy or rent costumes the company doesn’t make, makes sure all the costumes fit the singers and supervises the **wardrobe staff** who make sure the costumes are clean and in good condition.

### **Production manager**

The production manager supervises all other aspects of the production, including the stage management staff (see below), wig, make-up, rehearsal schedules, and more.

### **Stage manager**

Stage managers are responsible for “calling” the show: during the rehearsals and performances, they tell the person who controls the lights when to change them; they tell the person who opens and closes the curtains when to do his job; they tell the performers when to enter and exit stage. The stage manager is the boss of the production during performances.

### **Wig and make-up master**

Just like in the movies, opera singers wear make-up on stage. Sometimes the make-up is elaborate (a young singer must be made-up to look old, for example) and sometimes it is simple. But in order for the singers’ faces to be seen under bright lights and in a large auditorium, all must wear make-up. Wigs are often used, even when the singers’ own hair will look fine, because it is easier for the wig master to set the wig than it is to set the singer’s hair.

### **Administrative staff**

Opera companies are usually headed by a **general director** (**Plácido Domingo** is the **Eli and Edythe Broad General Director** at LA Opera) and an **executive** or **managing director**. Other members of the staff include the **artistic director**, who casts singers in their roles and negotiates with their agents; the **marketing director**, who is in charge of advertising, public relations, and selling tickets; the **development director**, who is in charge of raising money (operas are very expensive to produce — ticket sales cover only about half of what it actually costs!); the **finance director**, who oversees budgets and monetary expenses; and, at LA Opera, the **Education and Community Engagement Director**, who is in charge of programs for schools and the community.

## Calendar

You and your students should be checked in to receive your tickets **at least 30-45 minutes** before your performance or pre-talk. Late arrivals may not be seated until intermission.

### ***La Bohème — Giacomo Puccini***

*Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 2:00pm — Opera pre-talk at 12:30pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday, September 7, 2019 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

### ***The Magic Flute — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart***

*Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 11:00pm — Opera pre-talk at 9:30pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday, October 26, 2019 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

### ***Eurydice — Matthew Aucoin***

*Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 7:30pm — Opera pre-talk at 6:00pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday, January 25, 2020 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

### ***Roberto Devereux — Gaetano Donizetti***

*Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 7:30pm — Opera pre-talk at 6:00pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday, February 8, 2020 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

### ***Pelléas et Mélisande — Claude Debussy***

*Thursday, April 29, 2020 at 7:30pm — Opera pre-talk at 6:00pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday April 25, 2020 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

### ***The Marriage of Figaro — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart***

*Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 7:30pm — Opera pre-talk at 6:00pm*

*Teacher in-service: Saturday, May 30, 2020 from 9:00 to 11:00am*

## Deadlines

Applications for all Opera Prep events are open until the event fills. To find out if applications are still being accepted, please email [educom@laopera.com](mailto:educom@laopera.com) or call 213-972-3157.

- Receipt of application will be confirmed by the online form upon successful submission.
- Receipt of confirmation does not indicate approval of application.
- Application will be reviewed by LA Opera staff and accepted or returned for revision.
- Once all available seats are committed, applications for that opera will be closed.

## Important

Please be realistic about the number of tickets you request. If significantly more tickets are requested than used, you may not be invited to apply for other Opera Prep events. To apply, teachers must submit one original lesson plan. This program is intended to provide a comprehensive opera experience for you and your students. We recognize that each teacher's situation is unique, and the number of chaperones teachers need to bring to the event will vary depending on school policies, students, their parents, transportation and other factors. LA Opera requires AT LEAST one chaperone for every 10 students. Teachers requiring a higher student/chaperone ratio should explain their circumstances on the application.

# Music Center

135 N. Grand Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90012

## Alternative Transportation

### Metro Rail

Patrons traveling on the Metro should use the Civic Center/Grand Park station located at First and Hill Street.

### Bus Routes

If you wish to plan your trip by bus, take a look at the [Metro Trip Planner](#) or call 323.GO.METRO



## Driving Directions

135 N. Grand Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90012

### Santa Ana (5) North

Take the Hollywood Freeway (101 North) and exit on Grand Avenue. Turn right on Grand Ave. Parking will be on the right hand side.

### Golden State (5) South

Take Pasadena Fwy (110 South) to Santa Ana (5)/San Bernardino (10) Freeway. Exit at Temple Street. Turn left on Temple and right on Grand. Parking is on the right hand side.

### Hollywood (101) North

Exit on Grand Avenue. Turn right on Grand Ave and proceed. Parking will be on the right hand side of the street.

### Hollywood (101) South

Exit on Temple Street. Turn left on Temple and right on Grand. Parking will be on the right hand side of the street.

### Harbor (110) North

Follow signs to Santa Ana (5)/San Bernardino (10) Freeway (South). Exit on Temple Street. Turn left on Temple and right on Grand. Parking is on the right hand side.

### Pasadena (110) South

Exit on Hill Street. Proceed on Hill to Temple and turn right. Make a left on Grand Ave. and parking will be located on the right hand side.

### Santa Monica (10) East

Take Pasadena Freeway (110 North) and follow signs to Santa Ana (5)/San Bernardino (10) Freeway (South). Exit at Temple Street. Turn left onto Temple and right on Grand Ave. Parking is on the right hand side.

### San Bernardino (10) West

Take 101 North and exit on Grand Avenue. Turn right on Grand Ave and parking will be on the right hand side of the street.