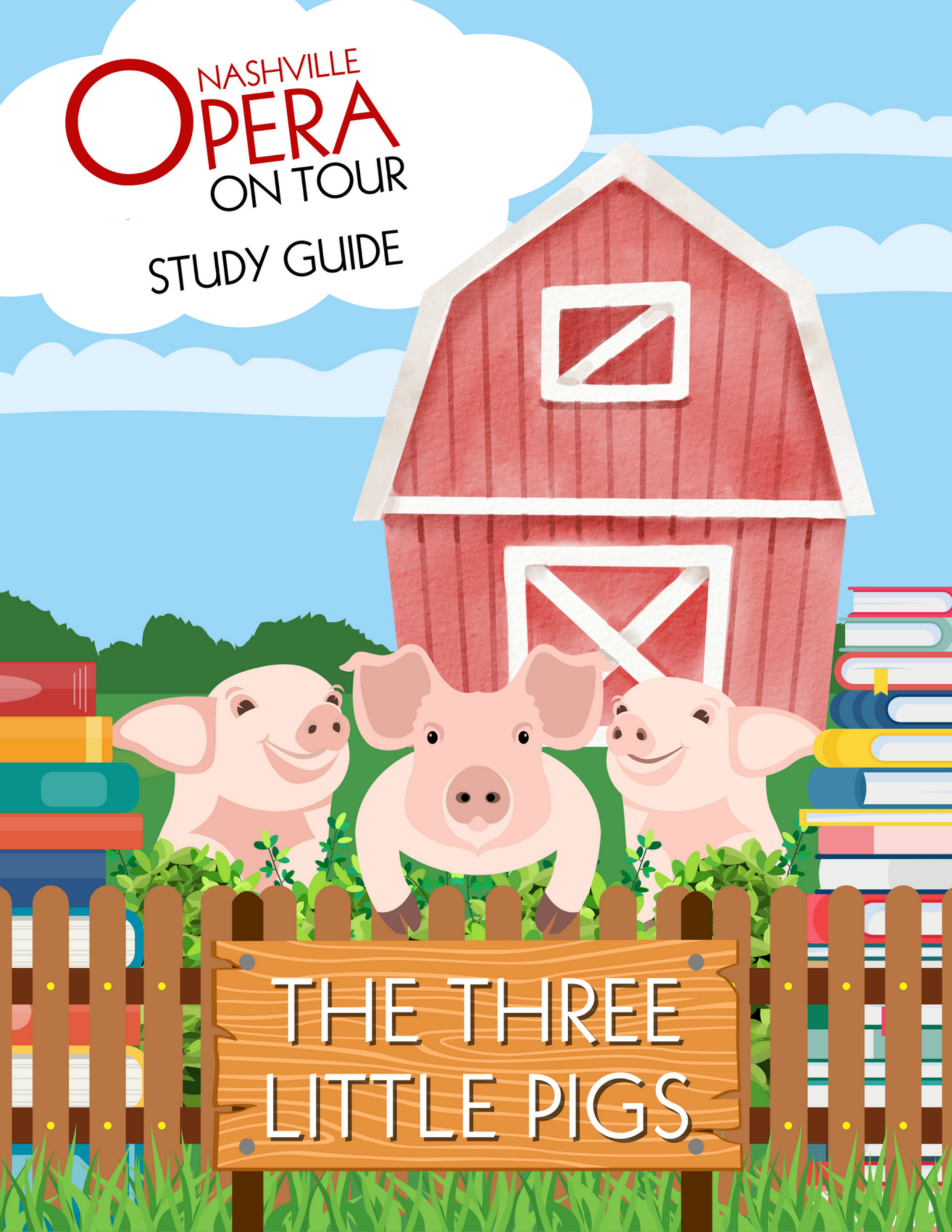


NASHVILLE  
**OPERA**  
ON TOUR

STUDY GUIDE



THE THREE  
LITTLE PIGS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Activities: Opera.....	3
Synopsis: The Three Little Pigs.....	4
Activities: Listen & Learn (Music).....	5
Activities: Act Out a Scene (Theatre).....	6
Activities: Let's See It (Visual Art).....	7
Meet the Creator & Composer of The Three Little Pigs.....	8
Meet the Cast.....	9
Operatic Voices (Science).....	10
Voice Types (Science, Music).....	11
Musical Terms (Music).....	13
Activities: Language Arts.....	15
Activities: Life Applications.....	16
How Sound is Heard (Science).....	17
A Singer's Body (Science).....	18
Follow-up Activities.....	19
Puzzle: Three Pigs Word Search.....	21



Cast of 2023 ON TOUR's Little Red's Most Unusual Day

# ACTIVITIES: OPERA, OF COURSE!

Find out what preconceptions your students might have about opera.

Split them into groups and have them act out a one-minute scene that includes all their ideas of what they think about opera (fat ladies and all – make no restrictions here). Do the same activity after they've watched a live performance. (K-4:TH 2c)

What words come to mind when you say opera? Divide a bulletin board into two sides. On one side, have students post descriptive words related to opera. After watching a performance, collect a second list and post these words on the other side. (K-4:TH 6a)



Nashville Opera's La Boheme, 2022

Discuss how opera is like a play (they both have a story, characters, costumes, audiences, and words) and how it is different (opera has singers, music throughout, arias, duets, ensembles). (K-4: MU 8a; K-4: TH 6b)

Start with the story. In simple terms, an opera is just a story that is sung. Before introducing the music, read them the plot synopsis of *The Three Little Pigs*. What is a fairy tale? How is a fairy tale different from "real life?" What are some other fairy tales?

- Ask the students to discuss the story and its characters. How would they tell the same story?
  - Have your students make up their own fairy tale. Select several students to tell their stories. Use vivid descriptions to make the characters real, funny, emotional, etc.
  - Discuss the differences between an opera and a play, a movie, a concert, or a music video; watching a live performance and watching a performance on television.
  - What part does an audience play in an opera?
  - What would be a good topic for an opera? Think about movies, books, fairy tales, historical events, and everyday situations. What kind of music would accompany different topics...fast/slow, loud/soft, smooth/jumpy?
- (K-4:TH 6c; K-4:MU 6c, 9b, 9c)

Listen to an example of operatic music. Have students list the differences between operatic music and other types of music they are familiar with such as pop, rap, country, jazz, or musical theatre. Discuss differences in vocal quality, range of dynamics, dramatic intensity, instrumentation, etc. (K-4: MU 9a, 9b, 9c)

# SYNOPSIS: THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

Despina sits at home, reading a good book. Her brothers Cherubino and Don Giovanni try to play a trick on her by telling her that the Big Bad Wolf is coming to their house. An angry Despina reminds them that their mother has decided that the three little pigs are old enough to leave their parents' home. They must each build their own house to live in, as grown-ups do. The siblings argue as to what is the best way to build a house. Despina decides to find some books about house construction at the library. The two brothers think books are silly and that they can build snug little houses without any help. Despina ignores them and heads off to the library.

In front of the library, Wolfgang Bigbad paces back and forth. He is in a bad mood because he hasn't had anything to eat all day. He sees the three little pigs approaching, and pretends to be a statue in hopes of catching them and turning them into a snack. Despina goes into the library while Cherubino and Don Giovanni stay outside and pretend to sword-fight. When they first notice the "statue", they are frightened. They dare each other to touch it, and then invite it to dinner. To their surprise and terror, the "statue" nods that it will join them.

Later, the pigs have each built a house. Wolfgang Bigbad sneaks out of the woods to Don Giovanni's house of straw. The wolf blows down the straw house and chases Giovanni to Cherubino's house of sticks. He blows down the stick house as well. The brothers run to Despina's brick house, only to find that she has taken her books back to the library. When Wolfgang's effort to blow down the house of bricks is unsuccessful, he reminds them that he has come to dinner, as they asked him to – only now they will be the main course! As he tries to get inside, Despina comes in and manages to trap the wolf! A reformed Wolfgang admits that even big bullies can be shrunken down to size and joins Despina, Cherubino, and Giovanni in the moral of the story: "When you fear a thing that's scary, take your questions to the library!"

The music from this production comes from four of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's operas: *Così fan tutte*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*. The character of Despina comes from *Così fan tutte*; Giovanni is the title character in *Don Giovanni*; and Cherubino is from *The Marriage of Figaro*. There is a scene in which a statue comes to life in the opera *Don Giovanni*—also an important plot point in *The Three Little Pigs*!

## More about the story

*The Three Little Pigs* is a traditional English fairytale, though the original author remains uncertain. Printed versions of the popular children's story date back to the 1840s but the tale itself is thought to be much older. The best-known form of *The Three Little Pigs* appeared in *English Fairy Tales* by Joseph Jacobs, published in 1890.

The central characters are anthropomorphic meaning they are animals that take on the qualities of humans. They talk, wear clothes, build houses, etc. These kinds of characters are found in many of our favorite stories!

*The Three Little Pigs* incorporates a very famous equation: "the rule of threes." It is thought that ideas, phrases, and jokes are funnier and more satisfying if they come in a sequence of three. Notice: there are three little pigs, three kinds of houses, and it takes the wolf three tries before he is defeated.

*The Three Little Pigs* remains a favorite children's story and has been adapted by Disney, Warner Brothers and all four of DreamWorks Animation's *Shrek* films.

# ACTIVITIES: LISTEN & LEARN (MUSIC)

Teach students the meanings of different musical terms on pgs. 13-14. On our website soon under Teacher Resources, the following tracks will be posted. Using the following tracks, identify and/or demonstrate these concepts. Please note that this will NOT be the entire production, just musical highlights. (K-4: MU 6c, 6d)

- Track 1 Opening Dialogue
- Track 2 "Oh help me, Despinetta!" (duet)
- Track 3 Dialogue #2
- Track 4 "I will build a house" (trio)
- Track 5 Dialogue #3
- Track 6 "I know the answer" (aria)
- Track 7 Dialogue #4
- Track 8 "On the go from morn 'till night" (aria)
- Track 9 Dialogue #5
- Track 10 "Excuse me, Mr. BigBad" (duet)
- Track 11 Dialogue #6
- Track 12 "Oh little piggy" (duet)
- Track 13 Dialogue #7
- Track 14 "Now I am really very hungry" (aria)
- Track 15 Dialogue #8
- Track 16 "That's the end of the big bad wolf!" (quartet)



Nashville Opera's Three Little Pigs, 2017

Demonstrate the difference between beat and rhythm. Divide the class into two teams. Instruct one group to pat the underlying beat or pulse of a song on their knees while the other group claps the rhythm of the melody with their hands. This can be demonstrated best with "On the go from morn till night" and "I know the answer" (K-4: MU 2b).

Play a popular song that the students will recognize. Discuss how changing certain elements of the music (tempo, instrumentation, vocal timbre, text) would alter the overall effect of the song. How would it sound different? (K-4: MU 6b, 6d, 9c)

Write an original song. Within small groups, give each student a specific role in the composition/performance process: librettist (words), composer (melody), vocalist, instrumentalist, etc. Start by writing a short rhyming verse. Then add a simple melody. Next add accompaniment, and then perform it. Have students create their own instruments using simple objects that are available to them. The group should aim to perform a song which gives each member a different identity. Experiment with different timbres and tempi, and see how changes affect the song (K-4: MU 4b,4c).

# ACTIVITY:

## ACT OUT A SCENE (THEATRE)

"The Statue of Wolfgang BigBad" Scene II of The Three Little Pigs

Setting – Outside the Library

Cherubino Pig and Giovanni Pig see Wolfgang Bigbad who is pretending to be a statue.

Cherubino Pig: {after seeing Wolfgang on his pedestal} Giovanni, come over here. Do you know who this is?  
It's a statue of Wolfgang Bigbad, the Big Bad Wolf, himself.

Giovanni Pig: How come there's a statue of him outside the library?

Cherubino Pig: Because, there are stories that are written about Wolfgang Bigbad that people can read in the library.  
You know... Little Red Riding Hood... Peter and the Wolf... The Three Little Hogs...

Giovanni Pig: Well I'm sure glad he's just a statue, 'cause he gives me the creeps!

Cherubino Pig: Are you scared? {Seeing that Giovanni is in a state of high anxiety} You are scared, aren't you?

Giovanni Pig: {With unconvincing bravado} Me scared of him? Never!

Cherubino Pig: Yeah? Then go up and touch him.

Giovanni Pig: No!

Cherubino Pig: I dare you.

Giovanni Pig: {Shakes his head as if to say, "No way!"}

Cherubino Pig: I double dare you.

Giovanni Pig: Nuh, Uh! {Shaking his head twice}

Cherubino Pig: I triple dare you.

Giovanni Pig: Nuh, Uh, Uh! {Shaking his head three times}

Cherubino Pig: I infinitesimally dare you!

Giovanni Pig: Oh no! Not infinitesimally? {Cherubino quickly touches Wolfgang and backs away}

Cherubino Pig: Now say something to him.

Giovanni Pig: Like What? What should I say to him?

Cherubino Pig: He always wants to have us for dinner, so tonight we'll have him for dinner.

Giovanni Pig: Huh?

Cherubino Pig: Invite him to eat with us tonight.

Giovanni Pig: Are you crazy?

Cherubino Pig: {Threatening Giovanni with his wooden sword} Ask him!

Giovanni Pig: No!

Cherubino Pig: Are you a scared little chicken, or ARE YOU A PIG???

END SCENE

# ACTIVITIES: LET'S SEE IT! (VISUAL ART)

## Visual Elements in Opera

Opera isn't just music. It incorporates all the arts, especially visual art. Have students list all the visual elements of an opera or play (e.g. set, costumes, props, makeup). Discuss how these things can be considered "art." (K-4:VA 2a, 2c, 6a; K-4:TH 6a)

Read the synopsis for *The Three Little Pigs*. Have students draw what they think each of the characters might look like. (K-4:VA 1c, 1d, 2a; K-4:TH 2a, 3a)



Design a backdrop or scenery for a production of *The Three Little Pigs*. Draw pictures, build miniature models, or design a bulletin board. (K-4:VA 1c, 1d, 2a, 2c, 3a, 3b, 6a; K-4:TH 3a, 6a)

Make storyboards: Before building the scenery for an opera, the production designer draws out plans for the look of each major scene in the show. Have students pick out the most important moments in *The Three Little Pigs* and draw what they think each scene might look like. (K-4:VA 1c, 1d, 2a, 2c, 3a, 3b, 6a; K-4:TH 2a, 3a, 6a)

Imagine and draw what the set could look like. Have students draw pictures of what they think the Pigs' houses and the Library might look like. What color are they? Where are they located? Is there any outdoor scene? What is the weather like? (K-4:VA 1c, 1d, 2c; K-4:TH 2a, 3a)

Have the students draw pictures of what they think a typical opera singer looks like. Are they short/tall? Thin/overweight? Do they all wear the horns on their heads? Research some famous opera singers and look at their photographs. Compare the students' drawings with the real photos and get their reactions to what opera stars really look like. (K-4:VA 1c, 1d; K-4:MU9d)

# MEET THE CREATOR

## John Davies (1946—Present)

John Davies began his journey in music at the age of 16. That summer he worked as a waiter at a restaurant in Lennox, Massachusetts, during the famous music festival, Tanglewood. At 19, he saw his very first opera, *Falstaff* by Giuseppe Verdi and began studying voice formally at the Boston University School of Fine and Applied Arts. He performed his first opera role, *The Speaker* in *The Magic Flute*, during this time. He graduated with a degree in vocal performance and began early training as an apprentice at Santa Fe Opera with Western Opera Theater, a part of San Francisco Opera. He went on to appear with companies across the country, establishing a reputation for his characterizations of the basso-buffo (comedic roles) of Rossini, Donizetti, and Mozart. In 1997 he transferred to the other side of the footlights by founding Empire Opera Theater. He then made his mainstream directing debut in 2003. He has gone and continued to direct, appearing with such companies as Indianapolis Opera, Mercury Opera, Opera Theater at Wildwood, and Knoxville Opera. Mr. Davies takes an active interest in the performing arts for young people, spending part of each year writing, narrating and hosting educational programs for opera companies, symphony orchestras and children's museums across the United States. More than 60 North American opera companies have presented his opera companies for young audiences.



# MEET THE COMPOSER

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756—1791)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was born on January 27, 1756 to Leopold and Anna Maria Mozart. Wolfgang's only sibling to survive infancy was his sister, Maria Anna (nicknamed "Nannerl"), who was five years older. His father was a composer and musician who worked at the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, and his musical affinity and talent were inherited by both his children. The family toured Europe extensively, displaying their prodigious talent. In 1773, Wolfgang was employed at the Salzburg Court by Prince-Archbishop Colloredo. The employment lasted a brief four years, but provided opportunity to compose in many genres. He then went on to brief stints in Paris, Mannheim, Salzburg again, and Munich before settling in Vienna. Here, he established himself as a freelance musician and composer, due in large part to the premiere of his opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* in 1782. Later the same year, Mozart married Costanze Weber. In 1784, Mozart met and befriended fellow composer Franz Joseph Haydn. He and Haydn frequently played together in string quartets and Haydn was full of praise for Mozart. In August of that year, Mozart became a Freemason, the influence of which is reflected in his opera, *The Magic Flute*. In the mid-1780s, Mozart enjoyed a period of financial success and lived a somewhat lavish lifestyle, but by the end of the decade, his success began to fade. He found himself unable to book public concerts. He never stopped working and his financial situation began to turn around in 1791 while he was writing his requiem and final operas *La Clemenza di Tito*, and *The Magic Flute*. Mozart became quite ill around the time of *The Magic Flute*'s premiere. While there are many speculations about his illness, the most widely accepted is rheumatic fever, which led to his death in December 1791.





# MEET THE CAST

The cast is made up of Nashville Opera's Mary Ragland Emerging Artists. These performers come from all over the country and stay in Nashville for three to four months to take part in our training program. They are part of *The Three Little Pigs* as well as our mainstage production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. We asked our cast some questions so that you can get to know them!



## Sabreena Cherrington, soprano

From: Cedarburg, Wisconsin

Currently lives in: Cincinnati, Ohio

Favorite Food?: Potatoes- any kind! Who doesn't love potatoes?

Weirdest job you've had?: Dog Groomer & Strawberry Picker!

Where is the farthest away you have traveled?: I've been to Egypt, Croatia, and Slovenia.



## Maria De Conzo, mezzo-soprano

From/Currently lives in: Oradell, New Jersey

Favorite Snack?: Double stuffed Oreos

Do you have any pets? I have a corgi named Ted!

Fun Fact about you? My nickname in college was Cupcakes because I had a business selling cupcakes out of my car!



## Jordan Costa, tenor

From: Ridgefield, Connecticut

Currently lives in: Wood-Ridge, New Jersey

Favorite Holiday?: Thanksgiving

Do you play any instruments?: I used to play the bassoon.

Fun Fact about you?: I'm a third degree blackbelt in Taekwondo!



## Andrew Payne, baritone

From/Currently lives in: Waynesboro, Pennsylvania

What do you like to do for fun?: Playing guitar, working on accents, and playing golf!

Favorite Movie?: Raiders of the Lost Ark

Favorite Food?: Buffalo Wings

Weirdest job you've had?: I was the Beast from Beauty and the Beast at a kid's birthday party once.



## Frances Ho, accompanist

From: Nashville, Tennessee

Currently lives in: Chicago, Illinois

What do you like to do for fun?: Go on roadtrips!

Where is the farthest away you have traveled?: Taiwan, where my parents are from!

Fun Fact about you?: I want to learn how to play the accordion!

# OPERATIC VOICES (SCIENCE)

Singing in Europe and America is now generally divided into two categories: classical and popular.

What most people think of as operatic or classical singing developed in Europe hundreds of years ago. This style flourished during the seventeenth century as opera became a popular form of entertainment and operatic music increased in complexity.

The most recognizable characteristics of a classically trained voice are:

- an extensive range (the ability to sing both high and low)
- varying degrees of volume (loud and soft)
- resonance in the chest and sinus cavities (produces a “hooity,” “full” or “round” sound)
- an ability to project or fill a large space without amplification

## Training

Very few people are born with the natural ability to sing with an operatic voice. Classical singers take voice lessons about once a week and practice every day for many years in order to develop a beautiful operatic sound. In fact, most trained voices are not “mature” enough to perform leading roles on a big stage until they’re at least 28 years old. Compare that with the most popular singers on the radio today... Taylor Swift was just 16 years old when she released her first album!

## Two Tiny Muscles

Science tells us that all sounds are made by two things vibrating together. The same concept applies when we talk or sing.

The sounds we make are really just the vibration of two little muscles called the vocal chords. The vocal chords are held in the larynx, which is sometimes called the voice box. These two little folds of tissue vary in length but are typically between 12 and 17mm in adults—only about 1/2 an inch long!

When you want to say something, your brain tells your vocal chords to pull together until they’re touching lightly. Then, air pushes through them, and the vocal chords begin to vibrate, opening and closing very quickly. This vibration creates a sound. The pitches you sing are dependent on the speed at which the chords vibrate. A faster vibration creates a higher pitch. The length of the chords also affects the pitch of the voice. Longer chords equal a lower voice. Men generally have lower voices than women which means their vocal chords are nearly always longer than women’s!

## The Rest of the Body

The vocal chords are only a small component of a larger machine which creates a beautiful singing voice. That machine is the entire body, from the tip of the toes to the top of the head. In order to sing with ease, every muscle needs to be relaxed (but not lazy!). If even one muscle is tense, it can throw off the entire machine, which is immediately obvious in a singer’s vocal quality.



Open vocal chord



Closed vocal chord

## Breathing/Support

In order to sing long phrases with a lot of volume and a good tone, singers must breathe in a specific manner, making use of the whole torso area (lungs, ribs, diaphragm and viscera). As they breathe in, each part of this network does its job: the lungs fill up, which forces the ribs to expand and the diaphragm (a bowl-shaped muscle below the lungs) to move down. As the diaphragm descends, the viscera (stomach, intestines and other organs) are forced down and out. Singers describe this feeling as "fatness in the low stomach" or "filling an inner-tube" around their waist.

Expelling the air, or singing, is essentially a slow and controlled movement of those muscles. If all of the air escapes from the lungs quickly, the tone of the voice will sound breathy and will lack focus. Successful opera singers must be able to isolate the diaphragm and ribs, controlling the rate at which they return to their original positions. This allows for a consistent stream of air that travels from the lungs, through the larynx and out of the mouth.

## How's your breathing?

Lying flat on your back or sitting up straight, place your hands on your waist so that your fingers point in towards your belly button. Inhale slowly and try to fill up your stomach from the bottom to the top. Notice your stomach pushing out and your waist and chest expanding. Exhale slowly and audibly, as if you are blowing out a candle. Repeat this exercise, but inhale for a count of eight. Hold your breath for a count of twelve and then exhale. How long can you exhale your breath? A count of twelve? Sixteen? More?

## Resonance

One of the most obvious characteristics of an operatic voice is a full, resonant tone. Singers achieve this by lifting their "soft palate." This is a part of the mouth that most people don't ever think about and it can be difficult to isolate. Here are some simple exercises to feel where it is and hear the resonance in your voice when you lift it:

- Start to yawn. Feel that lifting sensation in the back of your mouth? That's the soft palate going up!
- With a relaxed mouth, slide your tongue along the roof of your mouth, from your teeth back toward your throat. The bony or hard area is referred to as the hard palate. The soft, fleshy area at the very back of your throat is the soft palate.
- Say the word "who" as you would say it in normal conversation. Now, say "hoooo" like a hoot owl. Can you hear the difference?
- Say the sentence "How do you do?" as if you were an old British woman. Lifting the soft palate is the foundation for the resonance in a singer's voice. With a lot of practice, a singer can lift his or her palate as soon as they begin to sing, without even thinking about it.

## Vibrato

Proper breathing and full resonance are essential for producing a clear vocal tone with an even "vibrato" (the Italian word meaning "to vibrate"). Vibrato can be described as a "wobble" in the voice or, technically, a consistent variation in the pitch of a tone. While many pop singers try to remove this element of singing for the sake of style, vibrato in an opera singer's voice is a must! It increases the warmth and resonance of the tone and also allows for accurate tuning.

# VOICE TYPES (SCIENCE, MUSIC)

All classical singers fall into one of the categories listed below. A singer cannot choose his/her voice type... it is something they are born with. Composers usually assign a voice type to a character based on his/her personality or age. Read these descriptions for specific examples.

## Female Voices

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

Mezzo-Soprano: Also called a mezzo, this is the middle female voice and has a range similar to an oboe. A mezzo's sound is often darker and warmer than a soprano's. In opera, composers generally use a mezzo to portray older women, villainesses, seductive heroines, and sometimes even young boys (like Hansel in Hansel and Gretel). This is a special operatic convention called a "trouser role," or a "pants role." The mezzo's normal range is from the A below middle C to the A two octaves above it. Cherubino Pig is a mezzo-soprano!

Contralto: This is the lowest female voice and has a range similar to a clarinet. Contraltos usually sing the roles of older females or special character parts such as witches and grannies. The range is two octaves from F below middle C to the top line of the treble clef. A true contralto is very rare. Some believe they don't exist at all!

## Male Voices

Countertenor: This is the highest male voice, which was mainly used in very early opera and oratorio (a genre of classical vocal music similar to opera but generally based on a religious topic and accompanied by a choir). The voice of a countertenor sounds very much like a mezzo-soprano's voice and they often sing the same repertoire. Like the contralto, true countertenors are very rare.

Tenor: This is usually the highest male voice in an opera. It is similar to a trumpet in range, tone, color, and acoustical ring. The tenor typically plays the hero or the love interest in an opera. His voice ranges from the C below middle C to the C above. The role of Giovanni Pig is sung by a tenor!

Baritone: This is the middle male voice and is close to a French horn in range and tone color. In opera buffa (comedic opera), the baritone is often the ring-leader of the comedy, but in opera seria (serious or tragic opera), he is usually the villain. The range is from the G that is an octave and a half below middle C, to G above. Wolfgang Bigbad is sung by a baritone!

Bass: This is the lowest male voice and is similar to a trombone or bassoon in range and color. Low voices usually suggest age and wisdom in serious opera. In comic opera they are generally used for old characters that are foolish or laughable. The range spans from roughly the F above middle C down to the F an octave and a fifth below.

# MUSICAL TERMS

- A CAPELLA** [ah-kuh-pél-luh] Singing without instrumental accompaniment.
- ARIA** [áh-ree-uh] An extended vocal solo, usually a showpiece for the singer.
- AUDITION** When a singer or actor tries out for a director, hoping to be cast in a show. Usually involves singing 2 or 3 contrasting arias and possibly a monologue.
- BEAT** The underlying pulse of a song. What you would clap along with at a concert.
- BLOCKING** Where the singers stand and move during a scene. Singers are given their blocking by the director and must memorize it along with their music.
- BRAVO!** An Italian word that opera audiences shout when they like a particular performance. It means "well done." BRAVA may be used if the performer is female, BRAVI for duets and ensembles.
- CHORUS** A group of singers who sing and act together; also a piece of music sung by such a group of singers. A chorus is also called an ensemble.
- COMPOSER** One who writes music.
- CONDUCTOR** One who stands in front of the orchestra and keeps the players together. More generally, they are the person who leads a musical ensemble.
- COSTUME** The outfit worn by each actor to reflect the time and place of an opera, as well as the personality of each character.
- CRESCENDO** A gradual increase in loudness in a musical passage.
- DECRESCENDO** A gradual decrease in loudness in a musical passage.
- DOWNSTAGE** The position on a stage nearest to the audience. Because the type of stage prevalent in the early opera houses was slanted or "raked," the closer a singer came to the audience, the lower the stage was on the ground. (see below for a diagram of stage directions)
- DUET** A musical piece for two voices or two instruments.
- ENSEMBLE** A group of people who perform together. In opera, these are specific characters with their own individual ideas and emotions. Also, a piece written for three or more voices or instruments.
- FINALE** [fihn-náh-lee] The ending of a large piece of music such as an opera.
- HARMONY** Several notes sounding pleasantly together.



INTERVAL	The distance between two notes.
LEGATO	[leg-áh-toh] A smooth manner of playing or singing with no perceptible breaks between notes.
LIBRETTIST	[lib-rét-ist] Author of an opera's text or libretto.
LIBRETTO	[lib-rét-oh] The text of an opera (Italian word for little book).
MELODY	The tune of a song. Notes sounding one after another, organized by an idea. Usually singable. It is the foundation for harmony.
METER	The grouping of beats in a piece of music into groups of 2 (duple meter) or 3 (triple meter). Meter is sometimes irregular or mixed between groups of 2 and 3.
MONOLOGUE	A long speech given by a single actor in the context of a play. The operatic equivalent is the aria.
NOTE	A sound with a specific pitch. Eight notes played in a row with a specific pattern of intervals make up a scale.
OPERA	A drama expressed through music in which the text of a drama is sung instead of spoken.
OPERA BUFFA	[opera bú-fah] A funny opera with elements of farce.
OPERA SERIA	[opera séh-ree-ah] A dramatic opera usually dealing with serious or historical subject matter.
ORCHESTRA	A large varied group of instrumentalists who play large musical works. In opera, The orchestra plays the music that accompanies the singers.
OVERTURE	An instrumental introduction to an opera that often makes use of thematic material from the body of work.
PIT	A large space below the stage where the orchestra and conductor are during a performance.
PRIMA DONNA	The "Leading Lady" in an opera.
PROPS	Objects, other than costumes or scenery, used as part of a dramatic or operatic production (short for properties).
QUARTET	A group of four performers. Also a musical piece for four voices or four Instruments.
RHYTHM	The pattern of beats created by the notes in a musical line. Can be found by clapping the melody or the words to a tune.
SCENE	The time and location where the action takes place; also a section of an act in a dramatic or operatic production.
SCORE	The written music used by the conductor during a performance. Includes all the vocal and instrumental parts.
SET	The scenery, built to represent a particular location (short for setting).
STAGEHAND	A person who helps put together and take apart the set. Also handles props and scene changes.
STAGE LEFT/RIGHT	The division of the stage from the singer's point of view. For example: a singer moves to his/her left, which is the audience's right. See pg. 13 for a diagram.
SUPER	A non-singing, non-speaking actor used in a crowd scene. (short for Supernumerary)
TECHNICAL	The stage management, lighting, scene-building, and other mechanical 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.
TRIO	A group of three performers. Also a musical piece for three voices or instruments.
TUTTI	[tóo-tee] Italian word that means "everyone."
UNISON	When two or more people sing the same notes and the same words at the same time.
UPSTAGE	The position on stage farthest from the audience. (see DOWNSTAGE for further explanation)
VIBRATO	[vih-bráh-toh] Italian for vibration. Slight and rapid fluctuations in pitch. The quality that produces warmth in the human voice.

# ACTIVITIES: LANGUAGE ARTS

## It's Story Time (Literature)

Discuss the parts of a story. Identify the beginning, middle and end of *The Three Little Pigs*. Read a traditional fairy tale version of *The Three Little Pigs* and the synopsis for John Davies' opera. Discuss the differences between the versions. (K-4:LA GLE 1.8.3)

Talk about conflict. Stories generally have some conflict that needs to be resolved. What are the conflicts in this opera? How are they resolved? (K-3:LA GLE 1.8.1; LA GLE 1.8.9)

Identify character types in *The Three Little Pigs*. Is there a "bad guy?" "A hero?" "A love interest?" etc? (K-3:LA GLE 1.8.3; LA GLE 1.8.7)

Character discussion: Which characters are fully developed? Which are not? Are there major changes that affect the character's growth in the story? What are each of the characters' strengths and weaknesses? How do the characters differ from each other? (K-4: LA GLE 1.8.4)

The moral of the story is... Fables were often written to teach a lesson to young children. Is this opera a fable? Is there a lesson or moral that John Davies is trying to teach? (K-3:LA GLE 1.9.1; LA GLE 1.8.4)

## Put it in Writing (Creative Writing)

New Endings: Read the synopsis for the opera *The Three Little Pigs*. Write a new ending for the story. (K-4:LA GLE 1.3.1)

Write a version of *The Three Little Pigs* that takes place in a familiar but different location. What would be different? Who are your characters? Are they the same? (K-4:LA GLE 1.3.1-1.3.3)

Tell the story from one of the character's point of view—like the Wolf! What would you be thinking throughout the story? (K-4:LA GLE 1.3.1; LA GLE 1.3.2)

Assist students in writing a critical review of the performance of *The Three Little Pigs*. Students in grades K-2 can be guided using single words to describe their musical experience. This project will facilitate students' listening, writing, communication, and aesthetic judgment skills.

Uncovering themes: Incorporate *The Three Little Pigs* into a "themes" unit in your writing curriculum. Have students choose one of the many themes in the production of *The Three Little Pigs* (working together, visiting and learning from the library, friendship, etc.) and use it for a separate activity. This activity could be writing a new short story with the same theme, or simply exploring how this theme is treated in *The Three Little Pigs*. What parts of the story provide examples of this theme?

# ACTIVITIES: LIFE APPLICATIONS

## When I Grow Up (Careers in Opera)

What industries might be connected to opera? (e.g., The electric company supplies opera companies with energy to run lights and super-titles during a performance; the fabric industry provides companies with material to make costumes; the travel industry provides singers, conductors, and musicians with transportation to and from the city in which the company is located.) What do you want to do when you grow up, and how would that career support the arts? What do your parents do? Could they support the arts through their jobs? (K-4:MU 8b)

Opera wouldn't exist without two very important people: The composer, who writes the music, and the librettist, who writes the words. Sometimes one person does both jobs. Most of the time, the words to an opera (or the libretto) are written before the music, but in some cases, the music comes first. Place students in librettist/composer teams. Try creating a 2–3-minute opera using both the words-then-music method and the music-then-words method. Another option would be to use existing materials for either the libretto (nursery rhyme) or the music (popular song) and go from there. Discuss the difficulties encountered in each method. (K-4:MU 4)

Visual artists have a role, too. Opera companies must advertise their performances if they want people to come. The Art Department has the task of creating printed materials that are interesting enough to catch peoples' attention. Have students create posters for the upcoming performance of *The Three Little Pigs*. Experiment with different colors and pictures to make the most interesting advertising materials possible. (K-4:VA 1,2,3,5,6)

Meet the press: Often, an opera company's Stage Director will do interviews with newspapers, magazines, and TV news programs. The Director must be prepared to answer many questions about the production. Have students role-play; acting as either the interviewer or the director.

Public speaking is a skill which is necessary in many careers, including opera. Several members of the Nashville Opera staff give presentations for groups that will attend the opera. In these talks, they present the story, the composer, and the music. Allow students to give a short talk for the class on some aspect of opera or *The Three Little Pigs*.

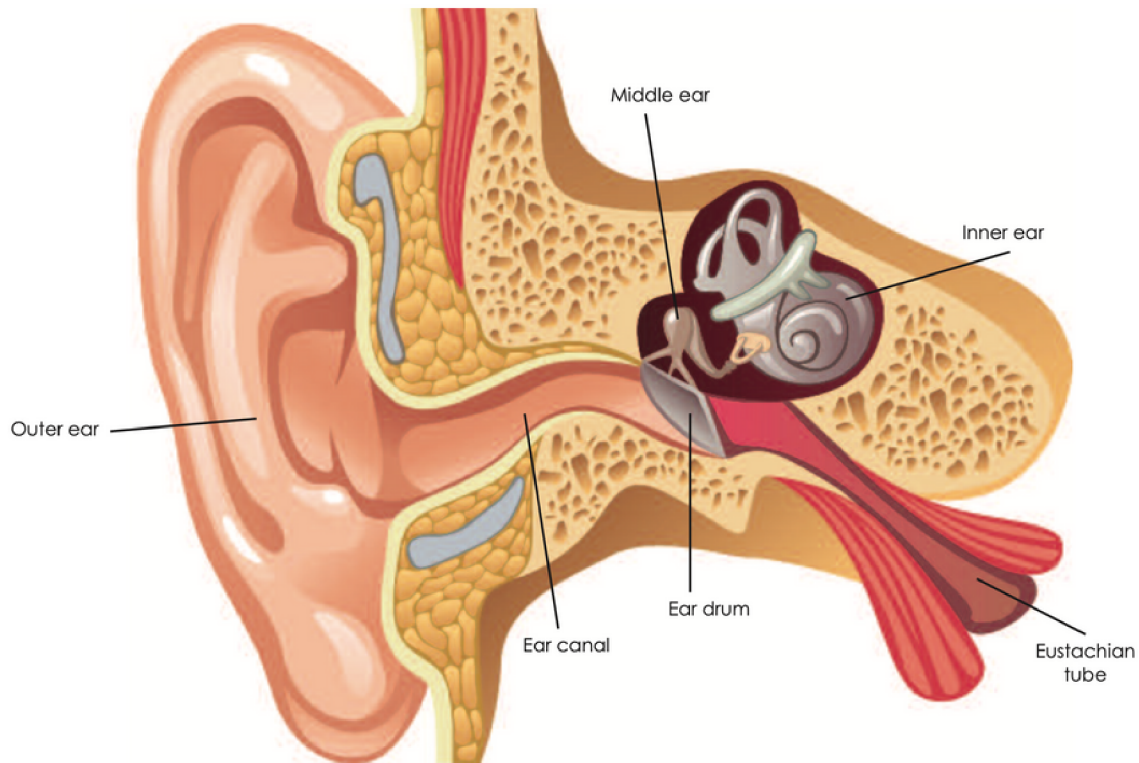
How do opera companies pay for their productions? They have sponsors. A sponsor can be an individual who donates money to the opera or a corporation like a bank or a grocery store. The Development Department writes letters to many people and companies asking for donations. Wording a letter like this can be difficult. Have students try writing such a letter to a local business. (K-4:LA 2.01,2.02, 2.03, 2.04, 2.05, 2.08, 2.09, 2.11. 3.0)

What is it like to be an opera singer? Interview a local opera singer and find out what life is really like for them. What would a typical day for them be like? (K-4:MU 9d)



# HOW SOUND IS HEARD (SCIENCE)

Using the diagram below, discuss the three different sections of the ear.



## The Outer Ear

This is the part that you can see. It has two jobs, to protect the rest of the ear and also collect the sound. The ear canal (hole in the ear), is the funnel for sound waves that enter the ear.

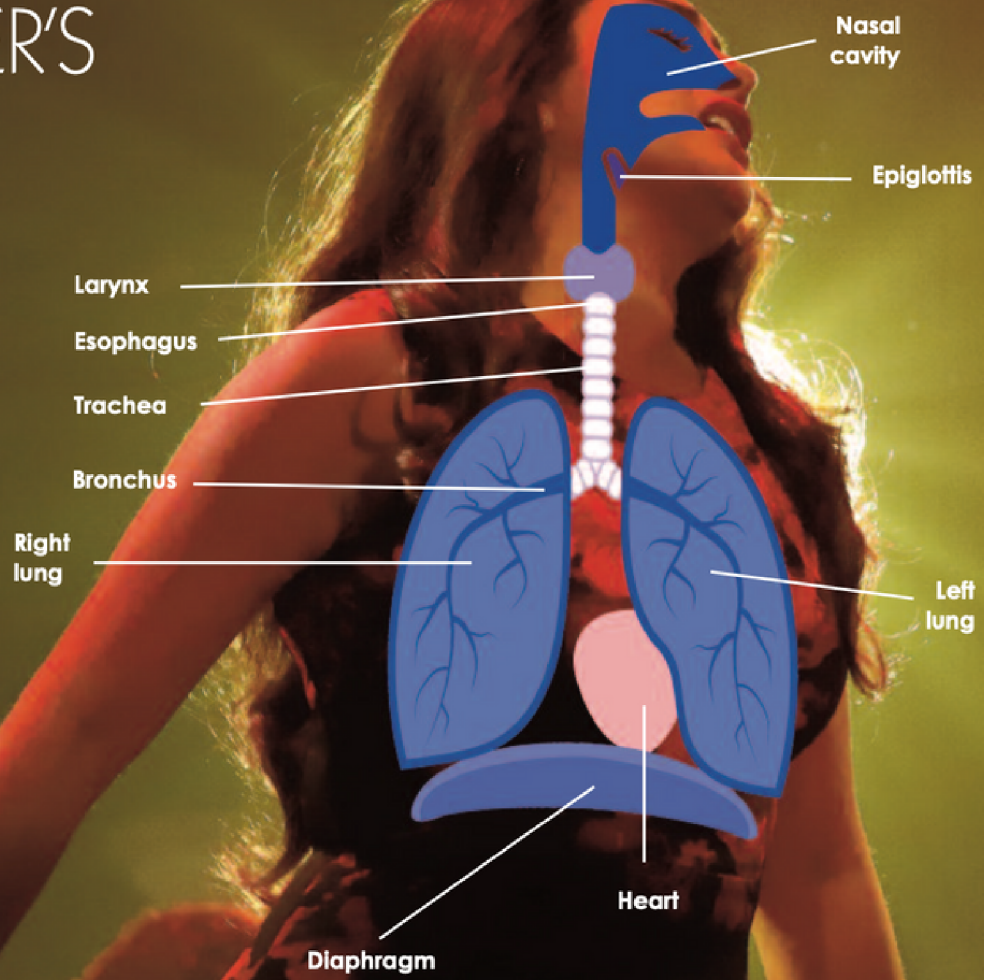
## The Middle Ear

Once the sound waves have been funneled through the outer ear, they enter the middle ear. It turns the sound waves into vibrations and sends them to the inner ear. The sound then passes through your eardrum and three tiny bones: the hammer, anvil and stirrup. These three bones are known collectively as the ossicles. When these three bones vibrate, sound is passed on to the inner ear.

## The Inner Ear

The inner ear's cochlea converts the vibrations into sound signals that are sent to the brain. The semicircular canals collect information about head movements and body position and send the information to the brain helping us balance ourselves.

# A SINGER'S BODY



Cassandra Zoé Velasco as María de Buenos Aires, Nashville Opera, 2017, photo by Anthony Popolo

# FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

## Happily Ever After the Opera Performance

Have your students write thank-you notes to the singers or our sponsors, draw pictures of what they saw, write reviews of the performance, etc. These can be sent to our office at 3622 Redmon St., Nashville, TN 37209. Attn: Hannah Marcoe

We ask each educator to complete the EVALUATION FOR TEACHERS. Hannah Marcoe will be contacting you post-performance via email with a link to our online form. (hmarcoe@nashvilleopera.org)

New to opera? If opera is a completely new art form to your students, this first exposure may have been quite different from what they expected. Discuss how their responses differ from their expectations.

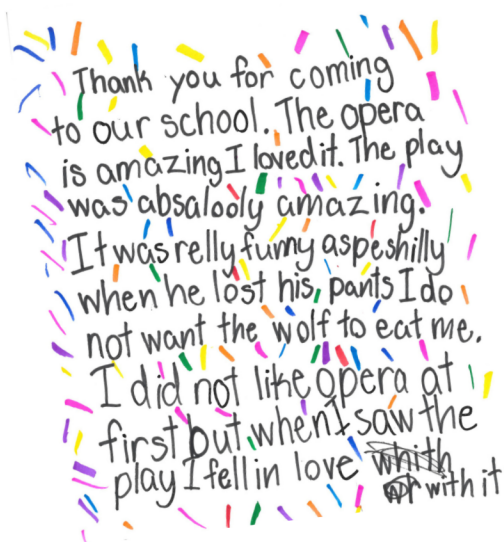
Been there before? If some students have previous experience with opera, talk about how they felt returning to the art form and how seeing opera for a second (or third) time compared with the first.

Character Study: Discuss how the main characters in *The Three Little Pigs* learn and grow over the course of the action. What do they learn about themselves and each other? What do they learn about their work?

Encourage students to take advantage of future opportunities to see opera live or on television and film. Arrange a field trip to a live performance or film. Visit [nashvilleopera.org](http://nashvilleopera.org) to learn about upcoming shows.

Put on your own play (with or without music) using the students in your school. Use an existing script or make up your own. You could even devise a simple narrative around songs your students already know. Encourage participation in a variety of ways: performing, making costumes, painting scenery, ushering (greeting audience members), ticket sales, marketing, etc.

Think about it. Divide the students into groups and have them list at least three things that they learned. Have them list questions that they have regarding the performance.





# THREE PIGS WORD SEARCH

Find 10 words that are associated with The Three Little Pigs.

MOZART  
CHERUBINO

LIBRARY  
WOLFGANG  
BOOKS

BRICKS  
DESPINA

STICKS  
BIGBAD  
STRAW

