OPERA THROUGH DRAMA: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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Master of Arts, 1997

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Abstract

Opera combines music and theatre by combining the art forms of design, drama, dance, music and poetry. The opera education and outreach programmes in place at all of Canada’s major opera companies focus on students in primary and elementary school.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of using opera within integrated drama studies connected to the curriculum of senior years’ students, and then examine how these classroom experiences effect secondary school students’ responsiveness to opera. The students in this study are comprised of culturally diverse senior years’ drama students from a major metropolitan centre in southern Ontario. Questionnaire and journal responses were collected from students during the study.

The results of this study on the effects of using drama and opera to create an integrated secondary school unit could assist Canada’s opera companies in designing their own integrated senior years’ models.
Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis is a result of the cooperation and contribution of several individuals. I would like to express my appreciation to the following:

- Andrea Vagianos, of The Canadian Opera Company, for her suggestions and enthusiasm,
- The Education/Outreach Coordinators at Canada’s Opera Companies for their cooperation,
- Sally-Heit Shepherd, for her support and contribution to the integrated drama/opera programme,
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To each of you, I give my deepest thanks.
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Chapter I

The Status of Opera in Today's Society

Introduction

It is true that people can live productive and happy lives without opera. But if they come to enjoy the operatic experience, they can add a dimension of aesthetic enjoyment and insight to their lives for as long as they live...

every child's access to this artistic heritage is a right of citizenship (Fowler, 1996, p. 1).

Opera can be most simply described as the presentation of a drama through song to the accompaniment of an orchestra.

The term itself is derived from the Italian word *opera* meaning "work" or "piece", and is usually applied to the European tradition of grand opera. Musical equivalents to this tradition can be found in other cultures, like Chinese (Peking Opera) and African epic storytelling. ...

Opera unites music and theatre through the combination of drama, dance, music, poetry and visual design, yet it is a genre of music unfamiliar to most young people (Vagianos, 1995, p. 2)

Opera education programmes have been created by opera companies because the assumption that the performance experience itself will bond new audiences to opera has proven to be overly optimistic. "Efforts to reach a new audience are more likely to succeed when they are part of a carefully designed strategy" (Opera Lyra Ottawa, 1994, p. 1). Opera education and outreach...
programmes are in place at all of Canada's five major opera companies, but to date, no formal research has been conducted to evaluate the success of these programmes and provide recommendations for future enterprises. As a result of this situation, the opera industry is struggling with two separate, yet related, issues: first, how to make opera more appealing for students, primarily those in their senior years of high school; and, second, how to measure the success of existing and future programmes, all of which are intended to generate interest in opera amongst younger audience members.

Previously, exposure to a performance was the most common opera education strategy. This study was designed, therefore, to determine to what extent using drama to create an integrated drama/opera experience would result in senior years' students responding positively to opera. This thesis explored whether or not using drama to explore the plot and character development of the opera would allow for both the story and music to transcend misconceptions and culturally diverse populations.

Currently, opera is not perceived as an effective way of integrating the arts, social sciences and multi-cultural heritages into the curriculum of our schools, particularly in the transition (Grade 9) and senior years (Grades 10 through OAC). This study examined the effectiveness of using drama to create integrated teaching units connected to the curriculum of the senior years' students, and then examined how these
classroom experiences effected the students' responsiveness to opera. The results of this study provide data that illuminate positive trends and help establish a tradition of compiling data to be used for research in the performing arts.

The Educational Context

Within the present educational system, opera is not included as a specific art form to be studied. Senior years' music programmes tend to focus on concert band, jazz band and woodwind ensembles, and few choral programmes are secure enough to tackle operatic choral music. Opera does not appear as a formal part of the drama curriculum either (though individual teachers may use it as background music). More importantly, it has not been considered, perhaps not even viewed, as an effective way to integrate the senior years' curriculums. Opera is not a part of The Common Curriculum, Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9, nor is it a part of the English Curriculum Guideline for the Intermediate and Senior Divisions.

This is unfortunate, because opera integrates music and theatre with history and culture by combining the art forms of dance, drama, music, poetry and design. "Drama impresses upon students the concept that there is more to learn about persons, events and situations than what they already know" (Ministry of Education, 1987, p. 28).

The Arts Education Context

Within Ontario, those who believe that the studying of the visual and performing arts in school enhances a student's
insight, sense of self, connection to the world, and performance in school, are often taken aback when asked to justify and/or substantiate this belief. Telephone conversations and interviews with the education directors of Canada's opera companies revealed that, unlike scientific fields of study, and like other performing arts organizations, the operatic community has not researched and examined the effectiveness of its programming. This has left the security of arts education courses in a precarious situation. Unable to provide documentation that what we do is of importance, we leave ourselves vulnerable to budget cuts and project elimination.

Drama is the ideal vehicle for integrating opera into the senior years' curriculum. It is the assumption of the researcher that opera is more accessible if approached through its libretto (or script) than via its complicated music. "The power of drama as a teaching strategy derives from its ability to engage students directly with the subject matter they are studying" (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 5). Therefore, even if the subject matter appears as foreign as an opera libretto, "drama has the power to engage students directly in whatever text they are exploring" (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 5).

Preserving the arts in education (often perceived as a frill) in a climate of fiscal restraint is a difficult task. Concerned educators, artists and executives have begun to join together in order to preserve this endangered species through public awareness. In his speech to the President's Committee on
the Arts and Humanities entitled "The Vital Role of the Arts in Education", Harold M. Williams, President of the J. Paul Getty Trust, discussed the most pressing issues facing arts education today, and the importance of the arts to the future of our world.

The arts define what we mean by civilization. They are a part of the framework of our culture. As a universal language through which we can express our common aspirations, the arts are a channel to understanding and appreciating other cultures. ... The arts reaffirm our humanity. They are the glue that holds society together. While improvement in the 3R's may enable us to compete effectively in the world economically and technologically, they do not feed the human spirit. The arts are the key to building metaphorical bridges that link us to our own creative powers and to each other. (Williams, 1992, p. 284)

Dr. Ernest Boyer of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, in a study entitled "High School", discussed the neglect of the arts in the curriculum of North American students:

The arts are essential parts of the human experience; they are not a frill. We recommend that all students study the arts to discover how human beings communicate not only with words, but through music, dance and the visual arts. ... Courses in the arts are the last to come and the first to go. (Williams, 1992, p. 285)
A report completed in 1988 by the National Endowment for the Arts, released the results of a two year study entitled *Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education*. This report defined four focuses of arts education: to give people a sense of civilization, to foster creativity, to teach effective communication, and to provide tools for the critical assessment of what one reads, sees and hears. Despite this report, and others like it, the arts still are struggling to maintain a valued place in today's schools, even with respected scholars like John Dewey confirming the intellectual rigor of the arts:

Just as it is the office of art to be unifying, to break through the conventions to the underlying common elements of the experienced world, while developing individuality as the manner of seeing and expressing these elements, so is it the office of art in the individual person, to compose differences, to do away with isolation and conflicts among the elements of our being, to utilize oppositions among them to build a richer personality (cited in Williams, 1992, p. 285).

"When learning is rooted in first-hand experience, the classroom comes alive and flourishes" (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 29). Drama affords students the opportunity to become a part of what they are studying.

When we are engaged in the field of curriculum - that is when we plan and implement programs, or when we assess students or evaluate courses of study - we ignore the human
drama at our peril. To do so is to deny that we are human beings - that students and teachers encounter one another in a living drama whereby they both create meaning out of what they do (Courtney, 1980, p. 2).

The Integrated Music Connection

Many scholars value having drama, and music in schools (Courtney, 1968; Miller, 1996; Slade, 1954; Way, 1967; Wilkinson, 1993). This thesis focussed on the value of using drama as a tool to integrate opera into school curriculums. Scholars support the use of music as a way of integrating the subjects in schools and making learning more meaningful:

... Musical training increases speech, fluency; folk songs improve a student's general knowledge of history and geography; rhythm training abets the development of math skills; and the learning of new melodies builds the memory (Nikiforuk, 1996, p. 73).

The body-mind connection is integral to successful and meaningful learning, and in fact is an accurate metaphor for the singing process: but he also had to bring something else from within himself in order to sing with such poignancy. It was that his singing was connected to his body, his mind, to his eternal soul and emotions, wholly and completely. His being was fully integrated. There was a mind-body-emotion connection (Krajewski, 1996, p. 2).

Along with the mind-body connection formed when music is a
part of the learning process, educators also perceive a literary connection:

The children compliment all areas of their language learning with music, and enhance their music activities with language...language and music are mutually supportive to the learning and development of the whole child (McGirr, 1995. p. 75).

Circuits in the auditory cortex, representing the sounds that form words are wired by the age of 1. The more words a child hears by 2, the larger her vocabulary will grow...music excites the inherent brain patterns and enhances their use in complex reasoning tasks (Begley, 1996, p. 57).

From this literary connection with music comes a synthesis of ideas which allows the student to make the learning situation more meaningful. "Weaving language and music activities together through the use of quality children's literature provides an integrated, natural setting for meaningful learning" (McGirr, p. 76).

The Integrated Drama Connection

Considerable research and scholarly literature support the use of drama in the school system. "Drama should infuse the total curriculum of any institutional institution" (Courtney, 1980, p. 96), and spontaneous action dramatic action represents the Self (p. 112). "Connected drama can make connections so that new things are understood" (Bolton, 1984, p. 186). Drama and the Whole Curriculum, states that the teachers, the school, and the
pupils will benefit from the development of a whole school approach to drama. "A cross-curricular policy towards drama in the schools is no longer an optional extra. It is a professional duty" (Nixon, 1982, p. 191). "Drama is a potent model for both psychological and social learning" (Bolton, 1984, p. 186).

Creating An Integrated Drama/Opera Connection

"Combining music and good books brings books alive, enhancing children's enjoyment of the arts and reading" (Lamme, 1990, p. 299). Why does such valuable curriculum enrichment seem to be focussed almost exclusively on the primary and elementary grades? What would happen at the senior years level, if both the drama and the music were equally important in the integration process? What if the arts organizations worked in conjunction with the secondary schools to create personally relevant, integrated programmes for these students?

The existing opera education programmes at Canada's main opera companies (Calgary Opera Association, The Canadian Opera Company, Edmonton Opera Association, Manitoba Opera Association, Opera Lyra Ottawa, L'Opera de Montreal, Opera Ontario, Pacific Opera Victoria, and the Vancouver Opera) are divided into the same three divisions as the education system: primary/junior, middle years and senior years. The most detailed programming (representing the bulk of the educational outreach budget) is most often geared towards the primary/junior and middle years students in the form of a touring school show. The most common outreach programme for senior years students is attendance at a
dress rehearsal of the current production. While every effort is made to create and distribute study guides for the schools attending the dress rehearsal, the implementation of these materials is left to the discretion of the teachers involved, and exist only as "add-on" resources to a school field trip. To date, only two of these companies were able to offer an opera education programme designed for senior years' students beyond attendance at a dress rehearsal presentation. At present, it is impossible to determine the degree of success these programmes have had on the students.

The Significance of the Study

As both an educator and member of the Canadian Opera Company Chorus, I feel that the creative forces behind opera today are producing exciting, innovative and accessible productions for their audiences. Opera envelopes the full spectrum of human emotions and portrays these feelings through music, dance, drama and design. Like Shakespeare, opera is an ideal instrument for studying all aspects of self and society. The problem is not that opera remains an elusive, elitist art form. Rather, the problem is that old public misconceptions about opera are preventing new audiences from experiencing its transformation as a relevant and exciting way to explore our human similarities and connections.

The results of a study that examined using drama to infiltrate the stories of the operas and create an integrated, accessible senior years' unit, could greatly assist the opera
companies of Canada to create a model programme of their own, based on the findings of this research. In a world struggling to cope with the recognition and celebration of the things that make us different, it is also essential that we embrace the qualities that make us the same. Music is a universal language, and the stories of the operas are stories we can all share.
Chapter II

The Opera Education Programmes in Canada: An Overview

Introduction

In a recent interview about opera and its future audiences, Richard Bradshaw, the Artistic Director of the Canadian Opera Company was quoted as saying:

You have to get young people to the point where they know enough to want to be involved, whether it be on the stage or as audience members. Today's young people are the future of opera, and without the interest of the young, the future of opera could just wither away (Eatcok, 1995, p. 6).

In an interview with Opera Canada, Margaret Genovese, a Toronto marketing consultant states: "The most likely person to attend an opera is anyone who has ever attended an opera before." (Barcza, 1995, p. 32) It is therefore not surprising that opera companies are interested in strategies designed to develop audiences and season ticket subscribers. In order to address this need for programming, opera out-reach and education co-ordinators are becoming integral members of opera companies. The main target audience of such programmes are the students in the school system, for they represent the future ticket purchasing consumer. "The goal of an integrated curriculum is to develop students' ability to relate new learning to previous learning and to use ideas and from many areas of knowledge in seeking solutions to problems" (Ministry of Education, 1995, p. 33). In order to design an interactive, integrated senior years
opera/drama experience that could be used to assess the potential benefits of a high school opera education programme, it was first necessary to learn about and analyze what kinds of opera education and outreach programmes currently are being used by Canada's opera companies.

This investigation was conducted by using telephone interviews (see Appendix A) with the education coordinators of Canada's major opera companies, and by examining the education packages produced by the companies. Each opera company interviewed made it clear that it believed strongly in educating the public about the operatic art form and that the most comprehensive programmes possible would be offered if funding were available. As a result of this analysis, common threads and possibilities for cooperative efforts between the companies emerged along with ideas for working to secure a permanent place for opera education into the next century.

The Opera Education Programmes in Canada

Pacific Opera Victoria

"Pacific Opera Victoria's Outreach Programme consists of student attendance at our dress rehearsals, school visits to explain the opera and mini-opera performances in the classroom" (Pope, 1994, p. 1).

Table I is a summary of the opera education/outreach programmes at Pacific Opera Victoria.
Table 1

The Education/Outreach Programmes at Pacific Opera Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School Tour</th>
<th>Dress-Rehearsal</th>
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Pacific Opera Victoria (POV) began producing opera in 1979. From 1979 to 1988, it had a two performance season which was expanded to three operas in 1989. Pacific Opera is known for mounting original productions and launching the careers of young, local Canadian artists. It is a professional opera company serving British Columbia's capital region and Vancouver Island.

In conjunction with the University of Victoria School of Music, in 1991, Pacific Opera Victoria developed a programme that brings a touring production of a live opera into the classroom. This programme targets primary and elementary students. Based on enthusiasm from the schools, this project
plans to continue to expand in the years ahead.

Tickets are booked for the dress rehearsal performances for high school students on a first come-first served basis. Pacific Opera Victoria prepares and sends out to each school attending the dress rehearsal an easy to follow and informative teacher's guide on the opera, and it visits each school to give a forty-five minute introduction to opera. This presentation includes a plot synopsis, taped opera excerpts, background of the opera and composer, artists' profiles, and the general process of what it takes to put an opera together. Students are encouraged to attend actual performances, so special student ticket prices have been created.

**Vancouver Opera**

Vancouver Opera is one of Canada's larger operatic institutions, with extensive opera education programming.

"Our aim is to make opera accessible - to audiences in the theatre, schools, and throughout the community and the province. Our programmes are aimed at enriching... the lives of individuals" (Jameson, 1995, p. 1). Vancouver Opera has developed a comprehensive series of five opera education programmes that serve all grades of school and public life. It is one of the three opera companies in Canada that is able to offer an opera education/outreach programme to senior years' students other than attendance at a dress-hearsal.
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The Opera in the Schools programme (OIS), is their cornerstone of education and outreach services, and has been in place for twenty-three years (Jameson, 1995). This programme reaches over 75,000 school children in British Columbia each year, and is the most comprehensive arts education programme in that province. Because it travels to rural communities, it is often the only arts based experience that hinterland students receive during the entire year. The Vancouver Opera Touring Ensemble (auditioned apprentice singers working with the company) comprise the touring troupe geared to providing introduction to opera experiences for children in Grades 1 through 7.

Student Dress-Rehearsals "allow students at the high school level to experience opera in its real home - the theatre"
(Jameson, 1995, p. 3). Study materials, (including a synopsis of the story, costume sketches, a biography of the composer, and suggestions for follow-up activities) are provided for preparation before students attend the final dress rehearsal of the show currently in production.

Vancouver Opera is unique in Canada because of its ability to provide an annual opera education experience specifically for high school students other than attendance at a dress rehearsal performance or occasional opera company/high school collaboration. Launched in 1989, The Opera Experience Programme, is a detailed four-part interactive course. Part One constitutes the classroom presentation, which is an introduction to opera, and the show currently in production. Three artists are involved in this workshop, a facilitator, pianist and singer. In Part Two, the students visit the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and audit an orchestral dress rehearsal with the principal singers in full costume. They then tour the back stage area for the "behind the scenes" perspective, learning about lighting, set design and construction. A seat in the first three rows of the orchestra section for an actual performance completes Part Three. Finally, in Part Four, the facilitator returns to the classroom setting for a discussion of the students' experiences.

Vancouver Opera offers an additional two outreach experiences for the public, targeting young adult and adult participants. Held on the Sunday afternoon prior to the Saturday
opening night, Opera Forums are discussions and musical excerpts presented by the company and its guest artists about the upcoming opera. Opera Overture, is a new Vancouver Opera initiative which offers University and College Continuing Education courses.

Edmonton Opera

Edmonton Opera has been in operation for 33 years, and produces a three opera season.

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Table 3

The Education/Outreach Programmes at Edmonton Opera

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<th>Age</th>
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For school students of any age, the company offers attendance at a dress rehearsal performance. For schools that order their tickets early, a backstage tour of the theatre is arranged. A preparatory workshop series for interested teachers
is available free of charge, and a study guide prepared by Edmonton Opera is offered to interested schools for a nominal fee.

Opera Overtures is a lecture and discussion series with the director and conductor offered prior to the opening night of the current production. This three part series has proved to be a very popular event.

Future education/outreach plans for Edmonton Opera include the formation of an Education Committee with members of the Board, teachers of all age levels, and opera administrators, meeting to create effective programmes for the years ahead, (H. Green, 1996, personal communication).

Calgary Opera Association

"Calgary Opera (COA) was incorporated in 1972 to promote public interest in opera, and provide an environment for members of the allied arts to develop their talents and enrich the life of Calgary's artistic community", (Speers, 1995, p. 1).

The Education/Outreach Programme at Calgary Opera has five facets, two targeting students and three targeting adults, though interested high school students are welcome to attend these workshops.

The following table illustrates the education/outreach programmes offered by Calgary Opera.
Table 4

The Education/Outreach Programmes at Calgary Opera

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<th>Age</th>
<th>School Tour</th>
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For primary/junior students, the company offers its Opera on Tour. This programme has been running for three seasons and has travelled to 89 schools in the Calgary area.

Middle years and senior years students are invited to attend the orchestra dress rehearsal of the current mainstage production. Previously, an area in the second balcony was reserved for schools and students were charged a small fee to attend this performance. As an incentive to register early for this event, backstage tours were given to the first few schools that reserved seats. Recently, a corporate sponsor made 400 seats available for students free of charge. To supplement this programme, the COA is open to any suggestions or integrated...
school/opera company experiences that teachers may have. For example, a design teacher brought her students into the costume department for a workshop. Such partnerships are encouraged, and the COA hopes to oversee more of them in the future.

For adults, three separate education programmes are provided. Chevron Opera Talks are offered free of charge prior to the opening of each new production. Two different sessions are held with convenient times and different locations. Attendance for the noon sessions is approximately 120, and for evening sessions is between 300 and 400. Plans are underway to transfer this event to local cable television.

Tours of the backstage area are offered to the public free of charge before the Friday evening Opera Talk. This new initiative has an average attendance of 50 people, and continues to grow. A four hour adult opera education course conducted by the University of Calgary is held at a local high school. The class studies the music and libretto of the upcoming opera, and is visited by the principal singers of the cast. Tickets to a dress-rehearsal of an opera are included in the course tuition.

Manitoba Opera Association

The Manitoba Opera Association (MOA) produces a three opera season, and offers both education and outreach programmes.
Table 5
The Education/Outreach Programmes at Manitoba Opera

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<th>Age Level</th>
<th>School Tour</th>
<th>Dress-Rehearsal</th>
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For elementary and middle years students, the MOA offers an Opera in the Schools tour across the province. This programme began in 1981, and with only a few pauses, continues to operate. A hiatus occurred in 1993, while the company restructured and commissioned a new work called Happy Campers. This opera will tour with Chamber Opera West, a small orchestra comprised of music students attending the University of Manitoba. This joint venture will expose students to the orchestral, theatrical and vocal facets of the operatic world. This new work was based on the premise that the students will feel very comfortable with the familiar theme of camping, and, in turn, this would allow the students to feel at home with what can be an overwhelming new artistic experience (Smith, 1995, personal communication).
For senior years students, the company invites students to attend the dress rehearsal of their mainstage opera. A synopsis of the story and general information package is available at the theatre for interested parties.

Teachers attending the show with students are invited to attend an introduction to opera seminar prior to the performance at no additional cost. For example, for the MOA's 1996 production of Nosferatu (a contemporary opera which premiered at the Canadian Opera Company in 1994) a special seminar was sponsored by the MOA and hosted by Bramwell Tovey, the conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and Randall Peters, the composer.

The Canadian Opera Company

The Canadian Opera Company (COC) began in 1950 as the Royal Conservatory Opera Company, and later became The Opera Festival Association of Toronto. In 1957, the Association made its final break with the Royal Conservatory, and became the Canadian Opera Association in 1959, and the Canadian Opera Company in 1977.

The COC has a very established education and outreach curriculum, broken down into two sections: student programmes and Outreach/Public Programming. Teachers are sometimes invited to act as advisors and sit in on the planning sessions of school programmes.
Table 6
The Education/Outreach Programmes at the Canadian Opera Company

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<th>Age Level</th>
<th>School Tour</th>
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The student/teacher programmes are further divided into twelve separate units. Create an Opera is an interactive unit connecting students with a composer and storyteller/dramaturge. Over a period of five weeks, the students, teachers and guest artists work together to create an original opera using the students' own story, score and libretto. This unit is geared to middle years students and would be co-sponsored once a season.

The Adopt-A-School programme, a new initiative undertaken by the COC in 1994, represents an ongoing partnership with two Toronto public schools. The aim of this programme is to make the operatic artistic experience a regular part of the students' lives over a multi-year period. Over several years, the students will learn about opera in workshops by those working in the
operatic world on stage and behind the scenes. The Adopt-A-School programme culminates in the students' participation in the Create Your Own Opera programme.

In-School Tours are offered for Ontario's elementary schools, libraries and community centres. Education packages prepared for the schools purchasing the show are mailed to the schools prior to the performance. Each receives an opera workshop presented by a music educator and/or member of the Chorus, introducing opera to the students. Middle and senior years students are invited to attend the Student Dress Rehearsal of a mainstage production. Each class is visited by performing artists who will describe the art form to them. This programme is called a Living Opera workshop.

Opera Storytime is an introduction to opera programme for elementary students using the art of storytelling. Children act out the stories using small hand props.

Altamira Investment Services sponsored the COC's first Summer Opera Camp in 1995, a free day camp for the students in the Adopt-A School schools and other inner-city schools in the vicinity. Forty students who participated in this programme this first summer performed at the Altamira No-Load Opera Concerts at Harbourfront Centre. This programme will continue to run as long as the funding is renewed.

Music! Words! Opera!, a workshop designed by OPERA America, gives elementary school teachers an experimental curriculum for
introducing a specific opera to their students. At the conclusion of their studies, the students write poems, draw pictures and tell stories about the opera they have studied, and attend a COC performance, tour the COC Opera Centre and receive a workshop by a member of the COC Chorus.

Specifically for educators, the COC offers season workshops for teachers bringing students to the dress rehearsals. The professional artists involved in these productions will introduce the teachers to the show they are to see. Information sessions are held for school boards in Metropolitan Toronto and outlying areas to introduce the COC education programmes to teachers. In conjunction with the Ontario Arts Education Institute, the COC is forming an association with other arts organizations to create a forum dedicated to forging effective partnerships with educators, artists and administrators.

The Canadian Opera Company has four public programming/outreach events in place currently. In its seminar series, a luncheon, lecture and round table discussion is held with visiting experts and artists about four of the season's productions. The Community Opera Project involves teachers in training, students, and adults from the community. For example, the Toronto Wagner Society, presented a thirty minute lecture and discussion prior to each performance of the 1996 production of Der Fliegende Hollander.
Opera Ontario

Opera Ontario (formerly Opera Hamilton) serves the artistic demands of a very diverse and expansive community.

Table 7
The Education/Outreach Programmes at Opera Ontario

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<th>Age</th>
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The ongoing education programme for elementary, middle and senior years students is attendance at a dress rehearsal. Schools that register early are eligible for a backstage tour of the production. Schools can subscribe to a three production series of dress rehearsal performances, or attend a single dress rehearsal. For every ten tickets sold, a free ticket is provided for a teacher or chaperon to supervise the students. An Opera Hamilton representative will visit each school for a discussion before the performance and, depending on the artists involved,
the singers may accompany this tour and provide a musical sample of the opera and answer any questions.

A very special project has been created for Opera Hamilton's production of *The Magic Flute*. Based on a student recreation of the opera *La Boheme* by an elementary school in the city, Opera Hamilton and a team of educators created an integrated Magic Flute unit based on the Common Curriculum. The challenge for the students is to create their own version of *The Magic Flute*. They will receive assistance and expert advice from the staff at Opera Hamilton, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, and Theatre Aquarius, as the students create sets, costumes, and design lighting specific to their original concept. (The Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra was to have been involved in this venture, but the organization folded on January 5, 1996 due to financial difficulties.) This is a pilot project; there are plans to repeat this process with future productions.

For both students and public, the company produces a Study Guide for the entire season of operas. This publication is given to season ticket subscribers, and is available for others to purchase for a nominal fee. It contains "musical and historical information about the operas, interesting facts about the composers and performers, and is a helpful resource for those attending the productions" (P. Oleskevich, 1996, personal communication).
Opera Lyra Ottawa

Opera Lyra Ottawa has developed an education policy, since "efforts to reach a new audience are more likely to succeed when they are a part of a carefully designed strategy for long-term audience development" (Craig, 1996, p. 1).

Table 8
The Opera Education/Outreach Programmes at Opera Lyra Ottawa

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Opera Lyra Ottawa produces a two opera season. The education and outreach programme called Operantics! is a three tiered programme. Each level involves a four step procedure, a teacher orientation session, an in-school workshop, a class project or field trip, and a student and teacher critique of the entire experience.

Level One is designed for Grades 1 through 5, and the theme
is "Let's Create Opera". This forty minute presentation introduces the basics of opera using songs, stories and audience participation. Level Two continues the theme of creating an opera and is designed for Grades 6 through 8. In this forty minute session, students learn what being a performer involves and study singing techniques, acting, staging and the rehearsal process (Craig, 1996, personal communication).

Level Three entitled "Let's Produce Opera" is offered to students in Grades 9 through 13. Students observe the technical set-up of an actual performance, from scenery to lights to wigs and costumes. Complementing this experience is attendance at one of Opera Lyra's mainstage productions at the National Arts Centre. Since its inception in 1990, over 3,000 students have participated in this programme. Unfortunately, because of social contract cut-backs and insufficient funding, the Operantics! programme was cancelled during the 1993/94 season, and in the 1995/96 season, the programme was limited to attendance at a dress rehearsal performance. Plans are underway to research new initiatives to fund all levels of Operantics! in future seasons.

L'Opera de Montreal

L'Opera de Montreal has only recently begun to develop its opera education/outreach programming.
### Table 9

**The Opera Education/Outreach Programmes at L'Opéra de Montreal**

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<th>Age</th>
<th>School Tours</th>
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It has two projects currently operating, a school matinee programme for students in Grades 4-11, and dress rehearsal attendance programmes for students in Grades 9-13 and university.

**Summary**

Everyone interviewed agreed that opera education was the key to securing the future of opera into the next century and that it is essential that the process begin early in a child's education before any misconceptions about opera occur. Currently, most of the opera companies in Canada focus their education programmes on students in Grades 1 through 6, using a version of the opera school tour and corresponding study guide.
Middle years students are usually grouped either with the elementary school tour or with the senior years dress rehearsal performance, depending on the company. Except for Opera Vancouver, the high school students attend a dress rehearsal of the mainstage production, with the amount of prior and post performance experience varying from company to company.

Great enthusiasm for opera education and outreach services exists at every opera company in Canada. Given the funding, each company would provide a full range of services to all students and adults.

A review of the literature revealed that none of the opera companies was formally documenting responses to its programmes for analysis. Furthermore, the opera education/outreach programmes are designed by the opera companies using guest artists as instructors, not designed to be a part of the curriculum using the teacher as the instructor. Consequently, most of the current programmes exist as "add-ons" and are dependent on outside experts to interpret opera to the students, reinforcing opera's elitist stereotype. As a result, unless purchased by a school or board as a special event, opera remains an invited guest in the school system.
Chapter III

Methods and Procedures

Introduction

This chapter presents a restatement of the problem, a description of the baseline and treatment groups, and an explanation of how the statements for the questionnaire were designed. This is followed by an outline of the research questions and the statistical procedures for data analysis. The instrumentation used is explained, as is the procedure followed to score the questionnaire.

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to examine how using drama to create a personally relevant, curriculum-based, integrated drama/opera experience, would effect senior years students' responsiveness to opera. A review of the literature indicated that only two of Canada's opera companies are able to offer education/outreach programmes to senior years students, and that only one of those programmes directly involves the student (Driver, 1996). As a result, unless purchased by a school or board as a special event, opera is not introduced to students with the same equity as Shakespeare or musical theatre. Opera is not considered as a natural accompaniment to a senior years drama programme nor as tool to enhance the integration of the social sciences into the senior years curriculum.

This research examined the effect of integrating opera into senior years drama classes (directed by the classroom drama
teacher) and the effects of this integration on the students' responsiveness to opera.

Questions Researched

The purpose of this research was to determine whether or not a senior years drama class could successfully integrate opera into its curriculum and make opera relevant and meaningful to its students. In order for this to be measured, it was first necessary to determine the entering knowledge and perceptions of opera for the students of the baseline and treatment groups. Therefore, the following questionnaire statements were designed to ascertain the students' prior knowledge of opera.

Knowledge of Opera

1. Operas are made only of music for voice and orchestra.
2. Drama, design and dance are significant components of an opera.
3. Lighting cues and set changes can be computerized.
4. Operas are created from stories about love, jealousy, hatred, revenge, joy and laughter.
5. Operas that are performed today were written over 100 years ago.
6. Operas that are performed today have been written in the last ten years.
7. Opera singers use microphones to be heard.
8. Opera theatres have over 1500 seats.

These statements were chosen because it is the perception of the investigator that senior years students do not know very
much about opera. Do students realize that opera is made up of many artistic elements, that operas have dancers, and actors, as well as singers? The researcher also wanted to know if the students realized how different opera is from musical theatre, and that the singers' voices are not enhanced by microphones the way they are in musical theatre.

The following statements represent the most common, and for opera companies, the most dangerous misconceptions of opera.

Perceptions of Opera

1. Opera is an art form enjoyed mainly by the wealthy.
2. Students that are good in math are also good in music.
3. Opera is an art form understood only by music experts.
4. Most opera singers are in good physical condition.
5. The best opera singers are large, overweight individuals.
6. Opera singers need to be well-educated.
7. Opera is too difficult for most people to understand and enjoy.
8. Opera is a profession for people over 40 years old.

These statements were created to focus on a more troublesome problem for educators, the pernicious elitist reputation of opera.

Personal Relevance to Opera

In addition to the knowledge and perception statements on the questionnaire, the students were asked to reply to two personal response questions.
1. I can see myself purchasing tickets to an opera in the next two years.
2. I think that in some way opera could be relevant to me.

These questions were added to the questionnaire especially to determine the difference, if any, in response between the pre-test and post-test experience of the treatment group.

Research Design

This research was conducted using a quantitative design using statistical analysis of the questionnaire and a qualitative design to encompass the journal responses of the treatment group. Parental and/or administrative consent was obtained from all participants in the study. (See Appendix B).

Sample

Description of the Baseline and Treatment Groups

The baseline group was comprised of twenty-two senior years drama students from grades nine through thirteen living in an urban centre in southern Ontario. These students were attending a performing arts summer school, and had had prior exposure to arts education programmes.

The treatment group was comprised of 35 grades nine and twelve drama students living in an urban centre in southern Ontario.

These classes were selected because both the artistic director of the performing arts school and the teacher of the drama students were interested in participating in this project,
and both had strong backgrounds in drama and music.

**Characteristics of Participating Schools**

Two schools participated in this study, one summer school and one day-school, both located in urban settings.

The baseline group was from an urban centre in southern Ontario, surrounded by an agricultural community. The participating students had chosen to attend a summer performing arts school specializing in theatre, musical theatre, dance, and storytelling. All students paid a fee to attend the programme. The survey was given by the researcher during a one-day workshop session, and the 22 participating students chose to attend the drama/opera workshop instead of the storytelling, dance or monologue options also offered that day. Some of the students were returning to the school for the second and third time. English was the first language of the majority of the students.

The principal treatment group attended an inner-city high school in a large urban centre in southern Ontario. The research took place during the second semester of the regular academic calendar. The students had chosen Drama as an option instead of Music or Visual Arts. For some it was their first time in a drama classroom. For the majority of this culturally diverse population, English was not their first language.

**Characteristics of Subjects**

A diverse socio-economic and cultural background characterized the total sample.

The twenty-two performing arts students in the baseline
group completed the study during one of their sessions. No other observations, journals, or questionnaires were completed by this group. The 18 females and 4 males ranged in ages from 14 to 18 years. They did not receive any specific drama/opera instruction prior to the completion of the questionnaire.

The treatment group was comprised of fifteen males and twenty females ranging in ages from 14 to 17 years. The drama classes had a history of irregular attendance, although the students attended the integrated drama/opera classes regularly.

**Description of the drama/language arts curriculum**

The English and Drama curricula are set by the Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario. The Common Curriculum (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 38) divides the specific learning outcomes for the Arts into four broad topics: understanding form, exploring meaning, understanding function, and experiencing the creative process. Basic English: Using English in the English Classroom (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 4) divides each grade into two themes. In Grade 9 the themes are horror and challenges; in Grade 10, crime and consequences; in Grade 11, children's literature and mystery; and in Grade 12, relationships and old age. Opera does not appear as a part of either document.

**Description of the educators involved in this study**

Two educators were involved in this study. The artistic director of the performing arts summer school has an extensive performing arts background as a professional dancer and
choreographer. This person is also a frequent stage manager for large, well-established, professional theatre companies.

The teacher administrating the integrated drama/opera programme at the high school has both professional stage experience and developmental drama training. As a professional singer and actor, this educator worked at some of Canada's major summer festivals and toured the country as a classical singer. As a drama educator, this person has a drama specialist's certificate and is completing a post-graduate degree in arts education.

Both individuals welcomed the opportunity to contribute to arts education research that combined the classroom experience with an appreciation of the professional product.

Instrumentation

The Questionnaire

A questionnaire was created to determine the extent to which the students agreed or disagreed with 26 statements about opera. The questions arose out of several meetings and phone calls with the Education/Outreach Director and, the Administrative Director of the Canadian Opera Company.

This collaborative group decided that the questions were best posed as statements and that a rating scale be used to determine to what extent the student agreed or disagreed with the statement. A rating scale of 1 to 5 was chosen, with the following descriptors:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree
5. Don't Know

The decision to include a "don't know" indicator occurred after the design of the questionnaire was completed; therefore, it was added as descriptor number 5. Any "don't know" response was counted as "missing" when the data was analyzed, so as not to unfairly weigh the agree responses. A non-equal interval scale was chosen in order to simplify the number of response categories for the students. Though this scale could have some insensitivity to mild changes, movement from one descriptor to another would indicate significant change.

The collaborative group also decided that the scoring of certain questions be reversed, so that number 4 was not always the most desirable response, (statements 1, 3, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, and 23) and that some distracter questions be added as a check to see if the students were actually reading each question, or randomly answering the questionnaire. Statements 4, 6, and 20 involved music, but were not knowledge of opera, perceptions of opera or personal response questions, (for example, statement number 4 was "the harp is the most difficult instrument to play"). They were deleted because they were not directly related to the study.

The researcher and the teacher administering the drama/opera integrated unit discussed whether or not the
students should put their names on the questionnaires. Student privacy needed to be assured and real names were not necessary to the scoring of the questionnaires. The teacher, however, felt that it was important for the students to take ownership of this project. It was decided that the students put their names on their work, but that the researcher would use a code to refer to the students, when required.

Journals

Journals were completed by the students at the end of each of the seven classes. They were written to the researcher with the purpose of responding honestly to the kinds of things they were learning and doing in the integrated drama/opera classes. The students were asked to be candid about what they responded to positively and to constructively comment on the things they felt were not as successful.

The journals were collected and kept by the teacher until the completion of the study. At the completion of the study, they were collected by the researcher for analysis.

Implementation of treatment procedures

Design of the integrated drama/opera session

It was the researcher's assumption that if an opera education programme is to succeed in the schools, it must have the support of the teacher involved, be accessible to both the teacher and the students and be connected to the curriculum so that its value is apparent as a part of a larger whole, not only as an add-on to the learning process.
Preparation of the Educators

Therefore, a seven lesson integrated drama/opera programme was developed by the researcher, the teacher, and the staff members at the Canadian Opere Company. The teacher was provided with "The Introduction to Opera" guide prepared by the Canadian Opera Company, with cross-curricular readings on the history of opera, a description of life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an explanation of the libretto, the anatomy of an opera, vocal ranges, the making of an orchestra and a dictionary of operatic and musical terms. (See Appendix F: reproduced with permission).

As the school was on the semester system, each class was ninety minutes long. The completion of some lessons took longer than one period.

Section 1: An Introduction

The questionnaire was administered to all the students before any instruction occurred. It was collected by the teacher as soon as it was completed.

The students were placed in groups, given markers and chart paper and asked to brainstorm about opera and what it meant to them. The students were then asked to define their conception of opera using words, pictures, and/or tableau to present their responses to the class. (Some used mime, a television interview, and some sang!) When this was completed, the students and teacher divided the "Introduction to Opera" unit prepared by the Canadian Opera Company into four main sections: The Life of
Gaetano Donizetti, A Brief History of Opera, The Anatomy of an Opera, and Who are the Players? Each group was given thirty minutes to summarize their section. After thirty minutes, the group reconvened, and shared their findings with the other group members. All the charts were posted in the class for future reference.

A final discussion followed comparing the ideas generated by the student presentations and the facts presented in the information package. Students were then instructed to find a quiet place and complete Response Journal 1.

Section 2: The Music

This class was spent reading through the study guide prepared by the Canadian Opera Company and using the cassette tape that described the different operatic voices and forms. The teacher placed the following terms on the board: soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass, duet, trio, quartet, chorus, and overture. The class discussed the terms, then listened to the excerpts from the tape to see if they could identify what was being played.

Section 3: The Story

The teacher introduced the opera to be studied, "Lucia de Lammermoor" by Donizetti and told the students the story of the opera. Each student was given a copy of the synopsis of the opera to read. Students were asked to think of other examples in literature, poetry, soap operas, real life, where feuding families and gangs have brought tragedy upon those involved,
e.g. Romeo and Juliet and The Outsiders.

The class was then divided into groups and each group member was given a card with a character's name on it. The students were asked to create an improvisation in which the characters discuss whether or not Lucia should have to marry Lord Arthur Bucklaw (Arturo).

The teacher, acting as a facilitator of the learning process, circulated from group to group and listened in on the improvisations. If necessary, s/he may offer suggestions, or join the conversation in role.

Students then listened to the sextet, Donizetti's musical response to the same discussion the students just had. Students were asked to compare and comment on the musical intensity of the discussion to the emotional intensity of the music. During a group sharing activity, students spoke the one or two words that, for them, best described the scene.

Section 4: The Music and the Story

The students knew that they would be touring the wig and make-up departments of the Canadian Opera Company and participating in a workshop with the assistant director of the mainstage production of "Lucia" in a few days. Still in groups, the students decided on an original way to present a portion of the libretto (the Mad Scene or the sextet) in the workshop session. They were encouraged to alter the time period, the setting, or other aspects of the story, if they wished. Two ninety minute classes were devoted to scene study preparation.
Section 5: Behind the Scenes

The class visited the offices of the Canadian Opera Company, and received a tour of the sets, props, costume and wig departments. The students were given copies of blank COC costume and wig measurement sheets to show how much detail is required to take each costume from paper and pencil to finished product.

They then met with the assistant director and acted their interpretation of their scene. This interactive process allowed students to discuss fairly their views of the libretto with a professional director and vice-versa. Some students used as background music the overture or sextet.

Section 6: The Real Thing

The students attended a performance of the opera they had been studying. Unfortunately, it was not possible to tour the backstage area because of complicated scene changes and safety concerns.

Section 7: It's a Wrap

In the last class, the students wrote their last response journal, commenting on the performance and the whole experience. A class discussion followed to close the drama/opera experience. The final task was the completion of the same questionnaire the students responded to six weeks earlier. The teacher collected the journals and the last questionnaire.

Preparation of Educators

The artistic director of the performing arts school was not required to administer the questionnaire, only to introduce the
researcher to the students. This researcher was responsible for conducting the completion of the questionnaire with the baseline group.

The drama teacher was part of the collaborative team that prepared the integrated unit. This person's strong music and drama background, as well as collaborative participation in the design of the unit, meant that it was not necessary to workshop the teacher in the implementation of this study.

**Testing Procedures**

Attitudes and perceptions of opera were collected using a multiple choice questionnaire and journal entries. The same questionnaire was given to the baseline group once, and the study group before and after the integrated drama/opera experience. The questionnaires were administered to the students by the teacher or researcher after each question had been read aloud and a quiet work environment had been created. Students were encouraged to ask for assistance if they did not understand any of the statements. The teacher collected all questionnaires immediately following the procedure.

Students were given class time to work on the journals, and were allowed to take them home and hand them in the next day if they were not completed by the end of the class.

**Scoring Procedure and Statistical Analysis of the Instruments**

The students used a numerical rating scale to respond to the 26 statements given on the questionnaire. A response of "1" indicated that the student strongly disagreed with the
statement, "2" indicated disagreement, "3" indicated agreement, "4" indicated strong agreement, and a response of "5" indicated the student didn't know, or had no response to the statement.

The responses to each question were entered onto a disk and analyzed using SPSS 6.1.2. For purposes of reliability analysis, the scoring of questions 1, 3, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, and 23 was reversed so that the direction of the items remained consistent.

T-tests for paired samples and independent samples of gender and site were run. ANOVA's (analyses of variance) were run to determine if gender played a significant role in the learning of the students between the pre-test and the post-test.
Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Introduction

This study was designed to examine how using drama within an integrated teaching unit connected to the curriculum of senior years' students would effect the students' responsiveness to opera. There were two integral hypothesis. The first was that the students previously exposed to the performing arts (baseline group) would have a greater understanding of opera than the students without experience in the performing arts. The second was that if the students in the treatment group were given the opportunity to experience opera in a way that was personally relevant to them and that was integrated into their curriculum prior to attending an actual performance, that both the performance and the operatic art form would have more meaning for them, and increase the possibility of opera becoming a part of their lives as adult performing arts consumers. In other words, the students would learn from the experience and be more receptive to opera.

Collecting the Data

Attitudes and perceptions of opera were collected using a multiple choice questionnaire and journal entries. The researcher collected the data from the baseline group and the teacher administering the integrated drama/opera experience collected the data from the treatment group.
The Reliability of the Scale

The students used a numerical rating scale to respond to the 26 questionnaire statements. To assess reliability of the instrument, the responses to questionnaire items 1, 3, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22 and 23 were reversed so that the direction of the items would remain consistent in scoring. A Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was computed for the pre-test scores of Group B and Group T combined. Prior to forming total scores, the three distracter questions were deleted, (numbers 4, 6 and 20). Question 19, regarding ticket prices and question 25, regarding the kinds of people employed by the opera company, were also eliminated since they were not essential to the study and their scores adversely affected the reliability. The alpha for the modified item set was .77, an acceptable level.

Analysis of the Data

Prior to analysis the mean item response to the retained items was computed. An item by item analysis of the responses of Baseline Group B is presented first, and then is followed by an item by item analysis of Treatment Group T’s pre-test results and then compared to the responses of Group B. Next, an item by item description analysis of Group T’s pre-test and post-test results is presented. A summary of the item by item description of initial responses and gender effects in Treatment Group T completes the analysis of the data.

Item by Item Analysis of Baseline Group B Responses

Knowledge of Opera
There were seven statements dealing with general understanding of the operatic art form. These questions were designed to discover what (if any) understanding of opera senior years' students who had chosen to spend their summer participating in a performing arts summer school, would have. Because teenagers are not generally familiar with opera, these arts students represented a group of senior years' students more likely than most to have some awareness of opera. This information would then form a baseline to which the treatment group could be compared.

Table 10
The Responses of Baseline Group B to Knowledge of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are only for voice and orchestra</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama, dance and design are significant</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are about emotions</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written over 100 years ago</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written in last 10 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers are well-educated</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers need microphones</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50
Two-thirds of Group B (67 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that operas involve solely voice and orchestra.

In response to a question asking if drama, dance and design were all a part of opera, 94 percent of Group B agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

All of the students (one hundred percent) agreed that opera was about emotions.

Group B felt that the operas being performed today were written over 100 years ago, with 75 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement, compared to 35 percent agreeing that operas performed today could have been written in the last ten years.

Eighty-eight percent of Group B felt that opera singers needed to be well educated, and 78 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that opera singers needed microphones to be heard.

**Perceptions of Opera**

Group B also proved to be very discerning when it came to separating operatic myth from reality.

The following table illustrates the responses of Baseline Group B to the questionnaire statements on perceptions of opera.
Table 11
The Responses of Group B to Perceptions of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response %</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive N</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed only by wealthy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood only by experts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed by all ages</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed all over the world</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers in good shape</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are overweight</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to understand</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A profession for those over 40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, 77 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that opera is enjoyed mainly by the wealthy, and 95 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that "opera can only be understood by experts".

Seventy-five percent agreed or strongly agreed that opera can be enjoyed by all ages and 94 percent felt opera was enjoyed all over the world.

While it is often perceived by the public at large that opera singers are quite overweight, 73 percent responded that opera singers were in good physical condition, and just 10
percent of the baseline group judged singers as overweight.

Eighty-five percent of Baseline Group B did not agree with the statement that opera is difficult to understand and 90 percent felt that opera is not solely a profession for those over 40.

**Personal Relevance Responses**

The questionnaire asked two personal response questions of the students. The scores were very positive towards opera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can see myself purchasing tickets to an opera</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that in some way opera could be relevant to me</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixty-seven percent of Group B said that they would consider purchasing tickets to the opera in the future, and 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that opera could in some way be relevant to them.
Item by Item Description of Treatment Group T Pre-Test Responses

Knowledge of Opera

Since Group T was a sample from an inner-city, multicultural area, it was difficult to predict to what extent opera would be familiar to them.

Table 13

The Pre-Test Responses of Group T to Knowledge of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operas are only for voice and orchestra</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama, dance and design are significant</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are about emotions</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written over 100 years ago</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written in last 10 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers are well educated</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers need microphones</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two thirds of Group T agreed or strongly agreed that operas only involve voice and orchestra.

Eighty-one percent of Group T agreed that opera was
composed of drama, dance and design.

Ninety-seven percent of Group T agreed or strongly agreed that operas are about emotions.

Fifty-seven percent indicated agreement with the statement that operas being performed today were written over 100 years ago, and 81 percent disagreed with the statement that operas being performed today could have been written in the last ten years.

Fifty-eight percent of Group T agreed or strongly agreed that opera singers needed to be well educated.

Seventy percent disagreed with the statement that opera singers need microphones to be heard.

Perceptions of Opera

Table 14 outlines the responses of Group T to the perceptions of opera questions.

Pre-test journal entries support the data collected from the questionnaires. Forty percent said that opera was enjoyed mainly by the wealthy. One student in a journal entry wondered "if one would have to dress 'richy' to attend an opera" (Student Journal, TF5, 1995). Another commented, "I don't know anyone who has seen an opera or even heard one" (Student Journal, TM1). "When I thought of opera in the past, I thought of wealthy, fat ladies dressed up and singing in voice [sic] much to [sic] high for my eardrums" (Student Journal, TF4).

Sixty-five percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that opera could only be understood by experts.
Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response %</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed only by wealthy</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood only by experts</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed by all ages</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed all over the world</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers in good shape</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are overweight</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to understand</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A profession for those over 40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 35

Over 80 percent agreed or strongly agreed that opera could be enjoyed by all ages, and 91 percent felt that opera was enjoyed all over the world.

Group T was split evenly over whether or not opera singers were overweight. Over half (56 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that opera singers are in good physical condition.

This issue was discussed by the students in their journals. Six of thirty-five students stated that opera singers were fat
Fifty-three percent felt that opera was difficult to understand, and in journal responses, opera was described as boring by eight students (Student Journals TF2, TF4, TF5, TF22, TF27, TF29, TM3, and TM9).

An overwhelming majority (91 percent) disagreed that opera was a profession only for those over 40.

Four used the terms "old" and "Viking" and "loud" to describe opera singers (Student Journals TF4, TM3, TM5 and TM10).

**Personal Relevance Responses**

The following table represents how Treatment Group T responded to the place of opera in their futures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can see myself purchasing tickets to an opera</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that in some way opera could be relevant to me</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 35
Forty-four percent said that they could see themselves purchasing tickets to an opera in the future and 70 percent felt that in some way opera could be relevant to their lives. In a pre-test journal entry, one student stated that s/he was "curious" about opera (Student Journal, TM6). Perhaps the most telling pre-test journal comment was from a student who stated that the reason s/he didn't like opera was because s/he knew absolutely nothing about it (Student Journal, TM1).

Comparison of Baseline Group B and Treatment Group T Pre-Test

A t-test was performed to test the hypothesis that the experienced Group B scored higher than treatment Group T on the pre-test questionnaire.

Table 16

A Comparison of the Pre-Test Responses of Baseline Group B and Treatment Group T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean item response for Group B was 2.92 and for Group T it was calculated to be 2.73. For Groups T and B, the effect of the prior experience on the results of the tests was statistically significant, $t = 2.61$, $df = 54$, $p < .05$. 

58
Results of Analysis of Group T Post-Test

Data was also collected from the treatment group at the conclusion of the integrated drama/opera unit.

The 35 grades 9 and 12 students had participated in the classroom sessions, had toured the Canadian Opera Company's wig and make-up department, had a master class with a COC director on their classroom scene study and had attended an actual performance of an opera. Four weeks had passed since the students completed the initial questionnaire.

Item by Item Description Analysis of Treatment Group T Post-Test

Knowledge of Opera

The students responded to the same statements on the questionnaire after the integrated drama/opera experience.

An additional twenty-five percent of Group T felt that operas are only for voice and orchestra after the integrated drama/opera experience. Ninety-one percent of the treatment group (post-test) recognized that drama, dance and design were all a part of an opera, an increase of 10 percent.

The percentage of students who felt operas are about emotions rose one percent, from 97 to 98.
Table 17

A Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post Test Responses of Treatment Group T to Knowledge of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Positive Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are only for voice and orchestra</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama, dance and design are significant</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are about emotions</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written over 100 years ago</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written in last 10 years</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers need microphones</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The group's response to the statement "Operas being performed today were written over 100 years ago" rose from 57 percent to 76 percent, a gain of twenty percent, and they altered their position on whether or not operas being performed today were written in the last ten years, by three percent.

The positive response to the statement on microphone use by opera singers decreased by half, from 30 to fifteen percent in the post-test.
Perceptions of Opera

There were some notable shifts in the perception responses of Group T in the post-test statistics.

The following table shows a comparison of the responses between Group T's pre-test and post-test. In every instance except one, the students' responses moved in a positive direction.

Table 18
A Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T to Perceptions of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
<th>Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed only by wealthy</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood only by experts</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed by all ages</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed all over the world</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers in good shape</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are overweight</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to understand</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A profession for those over 40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a decrease of eight percent between the pre-test and post-test responses of the number of Group T students who
agreed with the idea that opera is enjoyed primarily by the wealthy and that opera can only be understood by experts.

The percentage of students agreeing that opera can be enjoyed by all ages rose from 82 to 93 percent.

Group T's pre-test and post-test responses to the idea that opera is enjoyed all over the world remained consistent at 90 percent on both testing occasions.

The percentage of students responding positively that opera singers are in good shape also remained consistent at 56 percent while the number of students who felt that opera singers are overweight decreased after the integrated experience, from 50 percent to 26 percent.

Prior to the drama/opera integrated experience, 53 percent of treatment Group T felt that opera was too difficult to understand; this response was lowered to 43 percent in the post-experience test.

The percentage of students believing that opera is a profession for those over 40 rose from 9 to 15 percent.

**Personal Relevance Responses**

The treatment group responded more positively to the possibility of opera being a part of their future in the post-test questionnaire than in the pre-test questionnaire.

The following table shows a comparison of the responses between Group T's pre-test and post-test.
Table 19
A Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Personal Relevance Responses of Treatment Group T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Positive Response %</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can see myself purchasing tickets to an opera</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that in some way opera could be relevant to me</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a 29 percent increase in the students who indicated that they would purchase tickets to an opera in the future and a 10 percent increase in the number of students who felt that opera could in some way be relevant to them.

A Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T

The paired t-test was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant change in the students' perceptions of opera towards more positive responses to opera between the first and second experiences.
Table 20
A Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3.05</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 35

The results supported the hypothesis, with $t = -3.05$, $df = 34$, and $p = <.01$. The pre-test mean was 2.72 and the post-test mean was 2.87 indicating the students had learned.

Item by Item Description Analysis of the Responses of Baseline Group B Compared with the Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T

The pre-test responses of the experienced baseline performing arts students as compared with the responses of the treatment group after the integrated drama/opera studies were also examined. In most instances, Group T's answers rose to or exceeded the positive responses derived from the already arts sensitive Group B.

Knowledge of Opera

The following table illustrates the way the baseline performing arts students originally responded to the questionnaire statements as compared to the responses of the treatment group after the integrated drama/opera experience.
Table 21

A Comparison of the Pre-Test Responses of Baseline Group B to Post-Test of Treatment Group T on Knowledge of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Positive Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 22</td>
<td>N = 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are only for voice and orchestra</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama, dance and design are significant</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are about emotions</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written over 100 years ago</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today written in last 10 years</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers are well-educated</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers need microphones</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-test results of Group T are within three percentage points of Group B in four out of seven instances (drama, dance and design are significant; opera is about emotions; operas performed today were written over 100 years ago; and, opera singers are well-educated).

Group T's post-test response increased fifty-eight percent over Group B's response to "operas are only for voice and orchestra" at 33 percent.
Group B's positive pre-test response to "operas performed today were written in the last ten years" was 35 percent, compared with Group T's post-test response of 21 percent.

The percentage of students believing that opera singers require microphones was 22 percent in pre-test Group B and was 15 percent in post-test Group T.

Perceptions of Opera

In the table that follows, the responses to the perceptions of opera of the Baseline Group B are compared to the post-experience responses of Group T.

Table 22
A Comparison of the Responses of Baseline Group B to Treatment Group T Post-Experience on Perceptions of Opera Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Positive Response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed only by wealthy</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood only by experts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed by all ages</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed all over the world</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers in good shape</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are overweight</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to understand</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A profession for those over 40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

66
Compared to baseline Group B, post-treatment Group T had a higher percentage of students responding that opera is enjoyed only by the wealthy, that opera is understood only by experts, and that opera is difficult to understand. Over ninety percent of the same students responded that opera could be enjoyed by people of all ages all over the world.

Summary of Item by Item Description of Initial Responses of Baseline Group B and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T

Table 23 and Table 24 compare the responses of Group B with the pre and post experience responses of treatment Group T.

Table 22 allows for a visual comparison of all the responses of knowledge statements examined in this thesis.

Table 23 allows for a visual comparison of all the responses to perceptions of opera and personal relevance statements examined in this thesis.
Table 23

An Item by Item Comparison of the Baseline Group B Responses with the Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group T (Pre)</th>
<th>Group T (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 22</td>
<td>N = 35</td>
<td>N = 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only voice and orchestra are a part</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama, dance and design are significant</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas are about emotions</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today were written over 100 years ago</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operas performed today were written in last 10 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers are educated</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera singers need microphones</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 24

An Item by Item Comparison of the Perception of Opera Responses of Baseline Group B with Treatment Group T Pre and Post Test Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group T (Pre)</th>
<th>Group T (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td></td>
<td>N = 22</td>
<td>N = 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera enjoyed mainly by wealthy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understood by experts only</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed by all ages</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed all over the world</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are in good shape</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers are overweight</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera is difficult to understand</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a profession for those over 40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Relevance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will buy tickets to opera in future</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera could be relevant to me</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender Effects in Treatment Group T

Within the specific coding assigned to each student in the baseline and treatment groups, a gender description was given. Even though there was no original intention to analyze the data on the basis of gender, the decision was made to proceed with gender-based analysis because the data was available.

Figure 1

A Mean Comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses of Treatment Group T by Gender

Repeated measures analysis of variance with gender as the group and pre-test/post-test as the repeated factor were used to test the hypothesis that females and males would respond to the first experience differently and that they would differ in the amount that they learned.

The results are depicted in the Table 25.

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The hypothesis that males and females would respond to the items on the questionnaire differently was not fully supported by the .06 result. However, the size of the sample was relatively small and does indicate a strong trend, even though it has no power. (Interaction: \( f(1, 33) = .36, \text{n.s.} \)).

The hypothesis that females and males would learn over time was strongly supported by the change in the responses between the first and second experiences, but there was not a significant change in the way that they learned based on their gender.

**Summary**

The chapter reported on the analysis of the data collected from Baseline Group B, and Treatment Group T. In the post-experience results of the knowledge of opera statements, the treatment group’s scores became more positive—close to or above those of the baseline Group B, after the study.

In the perceptions of opera questions, Group T were more positive their responses to the questionnaire statements, but did not do as well as the baseline students that had performing arts backgrounds. The personal relevance response statements indicated that both Group B and Group T were open to including opera in their future.
Chapter V

Purpose of Study, Interpretation of Results, Implications for Opera and Arts Education and Recommendations for Further Study

Introduction

Two integral hypotheses were examined in this thesis. The first was that the student body previously exposed to the performing arts (Baseline Group B) would have a greater understanding of opera than the student body without experience in the performing arts. The second was that students who participated in the drama/opera integrated teaching units (Treatment Group T) would learn from the experience and become more receptive to opera.

This chapter will comment on the responses of the baseline group, elaborate on the data resulting from the change in responses among the first and second experience questionnaires of the treatment group, and discuss to what extent the integrated drama/opera experience effected the students' receptiveness to opera. Emerging from this data are observations about: the potential benefits to opera companies using such integrated studies to create a higher profile of the operatic art form in the senior years curricula; the use of drama to make opera education programmes at opera companies more successful; recommendations for immediate implementation of both programmes; and, suggestions for future research.
Interpretation of the Results

The Responses of the Baseline Group

All of the students in Group B had experience in the performing arts; therefore, it was not surprising that their responses to the statements on the questionnaire indicated that many of them possessed knowledge of professional theatre. What was apparent from their responses was that the students were able to apply their understanding of the theatre world and translate it to the operatic world. Almost one hundred percent correctly identified drama, dance and design as components of opera. Three-quarters realized that opera could be enjoyed by people of all ages. Only fifteen percent felt that opera would be difficult to understand, much lower than the fifty-three percent figure of the pre-test treatment group. Two thirds anticipated that they would purchase tickets to an opera in the future and ninety percent felt that opera could be relevant in their lives.

There was one unexpected result in Group B, related to the targeted audience of operas. One quarter of the students surveyed believed opera to be enjoyed only by the wealthy. This appears to be high, given the degree of informed responses Group B gave on the other questions. Although "wealthy" is a term that is relative to an individual's socio-economic status and life experience, the data collected suggests that many of the students in Group B believe attending an opera is an expensive proposition. Perhaps their response results from a perception
that one needs to "dress up" in a tuxedo or gown in order to attend an opera and that the cost of tickets for such an occasion must be as costly as these garments appear to be. Such perceptions, especially if held by arts-sensitive students, represent an area of opera education and outreach requiring further research.

In summary, it appears that exposure to the arts, and more specifically the performing arts, creates a basic understanding of all performing arts. In other words, a student studying the performing arts will be able to apply his/her knowledge to similar yet different forms of theatre like musical theatre, dance, opera, etc. Ninety-five percent of this group were aware that drama, dance and design are components of opera. It also seems that opera is fairly well understood by students with some theatre background, which bodes well for the acceptance of an integrated opera/drama programme at any school where there is a basic understanding of the performing arts even if opera itself in an unknown quantity.

The Change in Responses Between Treatment Group T Pre-Test and Post-Test

The responses of the treatment group to the pre-test questionnaire indicated a general understanding of the performing arts. In the first questionnaire, over eighty percent recognized that drama, dance and design were a part of opera and felt that opera could be enjoyed by all ages.

After the integrated drama/opera experience, Group T
changed their responses to several questionnaire statements. The notion that opera could be enjoyed only by the wealthy dropped from forty to thirty percent, an important change in perception and an indication of their own positive response to opera. The number of students believing opera singers needed microphones, or that opera singers were overweight dropped by half after the study. The percentage of students indicating that opera is difficult to understand dropped by over ten percent, most likely a result of the positive personal connection the students encountered in the integrated drama/opera experience.

Most important was the rise of thirty percent (from 43 to 73) of students in Group T believing they would purchase tickets to an opera in the future and the gain of eleven percent in response to the statement that opera could in some way be personally relevant to them. Given that the time span from the start to finish of the study was six weeks, participation in the integrated drama/opera experience is the most logical explanation for the change in responses. This conclusion is supported by the positive comments in the students’ post-experience journal entries.

To What Extent the Drama/Opera Experience Affected the Students' Responsiveness to Opera

Perhaps the students' own words are the most accurate assessment to the students' pre-test and post-test responsiveness to opera. In the initial journals, the words most frequently used to describe the operatic experience were "boring", "loud",

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"expensive", "confusing", "Vikings", and "fat" (Student Journals TF4, TF10, TF18, TM3, TM5, TM8, TM3, and TM10).

The students' response journals report the positive effects of the tour of the opera centre, the master class with an assistant director, and the attendance at a live performance of an opera. The integrated drama/opera experience allowed the students feel comfortable with opera. Suddenly "boring" became fun, as indicated in the following excerpts:

The trip to the Canadian Opera has brightened any dark spots I may have had. Thank you for helping me see a whole side of opera I never knew (Student Journal, TF7)

...how much fun I had, and how exciting it was. I learned a lot of things but [sic] and I found that the costumes were fabulous (Student Journal, TM4).

I really enjoyed the tour and I'm glad I went. Thanks for an amazing time (Student Journal TM8).

The part I liked the most about the trip was the scene study. Thank you very much for the suggestions and comments on our scene. We will try them out next time (Student Journal, TF4).

I also think that the people that work in the costume
department deserve a lot of credit for their time, effort and patience they put into making a costume (Student Journal, F23).

These journal responses support the hypothesis that using drama to integrate opera into the curriculum of senior years' students results in students responding positively to opera. **Recommendations for Opera Education/Outreach Programmes**

The research presented in this study confirms that programming for the primary/junior grades represents the primary focus at most of the opera education programmes in Canada. If provided with adequate funding, these companies would welcome the chance to create programmes for all age levels. However, especially for the smaller companies, the elementary school tour and the attendance at a dress-rehearsal for the senior years students constitutes the bulk of the education/outreach budget. This does not reflect the wishes of the companies, merely the extent of the programming they are able to do with limited resources.

Table 26 is a comparison of the education/outreach programmes offered by Canada's opera companies. The table reveals that only three companies are able to offer programmes to senior years students other than attendance at a dress-rehearsal.
### Table 26

**A Comparison of the Opera/Education Outreach Programmes at Canada's Opera Companies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>School Tours</th>
<th>Dress-Rehearsals</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Opera</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Opera</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton Opera</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary Opera</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Opera</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Opera Company</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera Ontario</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera Lyra Ottawa</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Opera de Montreal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

78
Of those three, Opera Ontario indicates that “when possible, Opera Ontario’s principal singers visit the schools” (Driver, 1996, p. 97) and Edmonton Opera reports “limited numbers of students are allowed to tour the production after the dress-rehearsal” (Driver, 1996, p. 38). Only Vancouver Opera offers two senior years programmes, “The Opera Experience” and “Career Preparation”.

**Implications for Opera and Arts Education**

The job description of the teacher has changed in recent years. "There have been countless reports on education, and each one has been a reaction to societal pressures of the day, and deserves our attention and study" (Pitman, 1984, p. 47). No longer are we solely the instructors of the curriculum. Our role in society has expanded to include being the watchful eye for potential child abuse, organizing breakfast programmes, teaching after school programmes, and counselling students on everything from birth control to suicide prevention. Different cultures, languages, and perspectives co-exist within the walls of our classrooms (Reed, 1992, p. 5). The arts provide teachers with a way to help the students make sense of the problems they face (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 5). Drama and music transcend individual differences, allowing for the same emotions to be shared, regardless of culture and language. (Glenn, 1991; Mark, 1982).

The researcher does not presume that an integrated drama/opera experience is the solution to every student’s or
teacher's problems. It does represent, however, an effective way to integrate drama, music, dance and history into the curricula of senior years' students and provide an experience to which each student can respond. Opera has maintained its place in the performing arts world for over four hundred years because it communicates its story to the audience so successfully. Given the opportunity, it will do the same in the classroom. "Opera companies are increasingly turning their attention to arts education for young people in an all-out effort to develop the fans of the future" (Citron, 1996, p. 12).

Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research

It seems counterproductive for an opera company to try to determine which level of school age students would benefit the most from an opera education programme and yet that is what has had to be done because of reduced funding. This research has shown that the senior years' students in the study became more receptive to opera after an integrated drama/opera experience, in many cases, more receptive than the baseline students who had prior performing arts experience. Drama helped make the connection from obscure art form to personally relevant stories about human experiences.

It is the conclusion of the researcher that a collaboration between the opera education/outreach coordinators and the senior years drama teachers could provide a cost-effective solution to the gap in senior years programming at Canada's opera companies.

The first recommendation emerging from this research arises
from the data of the Baseline Group B. Opera companies need to be aware that even among the performing arts students in this research, the misconception that opera is only for the wealthy persists.

**Connections between Companies and Educators**

There are several advantages to the opera companies in pursuing partnerships with the English and Drama teachers in the secondary school systems. The integrated drama/opera programme does not cost the opera company anything, because all artists involved are already under contract. The school would receive the scene study and curriculum from opera company and would only have to pay for the bus to the opera centre for the tour. The dress rehearsal tickets could be the responsibility of each student or the school.

Forging a connection with the Drama and English teachers in local regions would create a much larger audience for opera. Most importantly, an opera curriculum would be in the hands of those most likely to integrate it into their yearly plan and not lost in an administrative shuffle.

At present time, most opera education initiatives are purchased by the school. A school may only be able to afford a school tour every five years and may not be able to organize the cost, supervision, or travel arrangements for an evening dress rehearsal. Connecting the opera education experience with the senior years' drama curriculum means the programme could be run every year and reach a much larger audience.
Connections between Companies

The formation of a National Committee of Opera Education/Outreach Coordinators would facilitate communication between those responsible for all aspects of opera education. Once organized, the committee could consider sharing materials and resources, instead of independently producing documents like study guides for operas. National opera education awareness could be a future goal, with contests for senior years students such as create your own opera video, libretto, costumes etc.

The most important recommendation is that companies begin to compile data on their programming, questionnaires, response to workshop forms—anything that can be used to document the effectiveness of a programme. Many of the companies have stated their preference for student involvement in the outreach sessions; it is logical to extend that to involvement in their perception of the success of an event. This information becomes the raw data for the research required to secure future funding from corporations and the private sector.

In order to secure the future of opera (and all the arts) into the next century, it is important that interactive experiences be in place at the primary/junior, middle and senior years of the school system, and that both quantitative and qualitative data are recorded to measure the success of these programmes. This data could help evaluate the success of the arts in education, and substantiate how music, drama, dance, and design enhance our lives. Education programmes like these help
produce adults that will be proactive in securing a place for the arts in future societies.

Conclusions

Opera companies today are producing relevant, exciting productions for all ages. Unfortunately, the public does not have enough experience to know what opera is as a performing art in the twenty-first century. The education/outreach programmes of the majority of Canada's opera companies focus on the school programmes that target the elementary school and offer dress-rehearsal attendance to the senior years' students.

Because senior years students are the closest in age to becoming audience members and arts advocates, it is crucial that opera education programmes include personally relevant senior years' components that build upon the introduction to opera workshops and school tours of the elementary and middle years' classrooms.

The cost of running opera education programmes appears to be the primary obstacle preventing the opera companies from producing additional senior years programming; the cost of the programmes prevents the schools from purchasing them.

Both senior years' students and their teachers look for ways to make sense of the world around them and connect with different cultures and perspectives of life. Using drama to integrate opera's stories and music into the curriculum is one way of building bridges between generation and cultural gaps.
The data collected for this research revealed that an integrated drama/opera programme resulted in senior years’ students responding more positively to opera. Journal responses like the following supported the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires:

Now that I’m finished working on and learning about opera, I’ve finally realized that it’s not all a bunch of fat people screaming at the top of their lungs. The opera [sic] is a form of art that tells a story through singing (Student Journal, TF25).

The results of the data collected in this thesis support the hypothesis that an integrated drama/opera programme is an effective way of making senior years’ students more receptive to opera.
References


Appendix A

List of Telephone Interviews


C. Craig, Opera Lyra Ottawa (personal communication, January 4, 1996).

Green, H. Edmonton Opera (personal communication, January 9, 1996).


J. McCune, Edmonton Opera (personal communication, February 24, 1997).


J. Smith, Manitoba Opera (personal communication, June 25, 1996).

Appendix B

The Questionnaire

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR GRADE

Grade 9
Grade 12

Please read each question carefully, and answer each statement by circling the number which BEST indicates your response.

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Agree
4 = Strongly Agree
5 = Don't Know
1. Opera is an art form enjoyed mainly by the wealthy.
   1    2    3    4    5

2. Students that are good in math are also good in music.
   1    2    3    4    5

3. Opera is an art form enjoyed only by music experts.
   1    2    3    4    5

4. Baseball players are the most physically fit athletes.
   1    2    3    4    5

5. Operas are enjoyed by people of all ages.
   1    2    3    4    5

6. The harp is the most difficult instrument to play.
   1    2    3    4    5

7. Operas are enjoyed by people all over the world.
   1    2    3    4    5

8. Operas are made ONLY of music for voice and orchestra.
   1    2    3    4    5

9. Drama, design and dance are significant components of an opera.
   1    2    3    4    5

10. Lighting cues and set changes can be computerized.
    1    2    3    4    5

11. Operas are created from stories about love, jealousy, hatred, revenge, joy, and laughter.
    1    2    3    4    5

12. Operas that are performed today were written over 100 years ago.
    1    2    3    4    5
13. Operas that are performed today have been written in the last 10 years.
   1 2 3 4 5
14. Most opera singers are in good physical condition.
   1 2 3 4 5
15. The best opera singers are large, overweight individuals.
   1 2 3 4 5
16. Opera singers need to be well-educated.
   1 2 3 4 5
17. Opera singers use microphones to be heard.
   1 2 3 4 5
18. Opera theatres have over 1500 seats.
   1 2 3 4 5
19. Tickets to an opera are very expensive.
   1 2 3 4 5
20. Ballet training gives football players better reflexes.
   1 2 3 4 5
21. I can see myself purchasing tickets to an opera in the next 2 years.
   1 2 3 4 5
22. Opera is too difficult too difficult for most people to understand and enjoy.
   1 2 3 4 5
23. Opera is a profession for people over 40 years old.
   1 2 3 4 5
24. Opera singers like Placido Domingo are sports buffs and soccer fans.
   1 2 3 4 5
25. An opera company employs mainly singers and musicians.

26. I think that in some way opera could be relevant to me.
Appendix C

Dear Student,

I am a graduate student at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and I would like to conduct a study that will examine an integrated Drama/Opera Education experience in some of your Drama classrooms.

Your experience will be divided into four components:

1. a study of the history of opera
2. a scene study/dramatization of a scene from the libretto of an opera
3. a field trip to the offices of the Canadian Opera Company, including a workshop of the students' scene study with a COC director, and
4. attending a performance of an opera

This study will examine the responses of high school students towards opera prior to and after an integrated dramatic experience using questionnaires and journal entries. These responses will be kept in a locked container, so that your privacy is ensured. You would be able to withdraw from the programme at any time, and if you request it in writing, your responses will be returned. A code will be given to each participant so that your name will never be used. You will not be subject to evaluative interpretation as a result of participating in this study. This experience would be adapted to integrate into the drama classroom, and would not detract from the prescribed curriculum.

Your written consent is required for an ethical review of this study by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

I would like to thank you for your interest in this research, and I look forward to working with you in the near future.

Sincerely,
Appendix D

Date
147 Parkmount Road
Toronto, Ontario
M4J 4V3

Principal
School
Address
Ontario
Postal Code

Dear,

I am a graduate student at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education wishing to conduct a study that will examine an integrated Drama/Opera Education experience in some of your school's Drama classrooms.

The students' experience will be divided into four components:

1. a study of the history of opera
2. a scene study/dramatization of a scene from the libretto of an opera
3. a field trip to the offices of the Canadian Opera Company, including a workshop of the students' scene study with a COC director, and
4. attending a performance of an opera

This study examines the responses of high school students towards opera prior to and after an integrated dramatic experience using questionnaires and journal entries. These responses will be kept in a locked container, so that privacy of your students is assured. This study does not present any risks to the participants, and students will be able to withdraw from the programme at any time. Each student will sign an informed consent form and a code will be assigned to each participant so that no names will ever be used. The participants will not be subject to evaluative interpretation as a result of participating in this study. This experience would be adapted to integrate into the drama classroom, and would not detract from the prescribed curriculum.

Your written consent is required for an ethical review of this study, and for acting as the parental authority for the students as they are not yet of legal age, by the Ontario Institute for Studies
I would like to thank you for your interest in this research. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Sandra Boyes
Appendix E

Written Consent Form for a Drama/Opera Education Research Study

I give my approval for the Drama/Opera Education Research Study to be conducted at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, and agree to act as parental guardian for those students under the age of eighteen and for whom it was not possible to obtain written parental consent.

Name: __________________________________________________________

Title: ____________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________
Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son/daughter took part in an opera study as part of drama class last year. Students were asked to write letters, and journals in response to their opera experiences.

Sandy Boyes, a research student affiliated both with OISE, and the Canadian Opera Company, has requested your permission to use the journals in her academic writing. The students’ names will not be published, and the name of the school will not be revealed. The purpose of the article is to explore student responses to opera. In order to use this research material, parental permission is required for any students under the age of eighteen years.

Please sign the form below, and return it to Mrs. Shepherd as soon as possible. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Drama Department Principal

I give permission for the work written by ________________________________ to be used in an academic study of opera in education. I understand that all journals will remain anonymous.

(Parent/Guardian Signature)
An Introduction to OPERA

A TEACHER'S GUIDE
PREPARED BY THE CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY
To Whom It May Concern,

This is to confirm that Sandra Boyes has permission to submit the Canadian Opera Company’s *Introduction to Opera* package, as well as the study guide for teachers that was prepared for *Lucia di Lammermoor*, as appendices to her thesis on opera education.

Sincerely,


Andrea Vagianos
Education & Outreach Co-ordinator, ext. 307
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WHAT IS OPERA?

Opera brings theatre and music together on stage by combining the arts of poetry, music, acting and design. It can be most simply described as the presentation of a drama through song to the accompaniment of an orchestra. The term itself is derived from the Italian word OPERA meaning “work” or “piece”, and is usually applied to the European tradition of grand opera. However, musical equivalents to opera can be found in other cultures where stories are told through music, for instance the Peking Opera or African epic storytelling. Because the Canadian Opera Company presents works that are in the European tradition, we will be exploring the elements of western opera in the following pages.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF OPERA

The Beginnings

The desire to combine music and drama into a unified art is an old one. Because of its abstract quality, music can penetrate the surface of feeling and arouse profound inner emotions of love or hate, anger or joy, longing or contentment, and much more. In opera, music lends its expressive power to the libretto to heighten the meaning of the words. The tradition of bringing the two together dates back to the ancient Greeks who used the chorus to sing, and sometimes dance, while delivering lines in the performance of a tragedy. In the Middle Ages elaborate sacred music-dramas were presented by the church on particular feast days; these were recited in plainsong by members of the clergy using the chancel for a stage.

The combination of music, drama and the scenic arts which we call opera today was born at the end of the sixteenth century in Florence, Italy. In keeping with the Renaissance interest in antiquity, composers attempted to recreate the art of the great Greek tragedies, with music and scenery structured around a drama to form an integrated whole. Early operas, called *dramma per musica*, or drama through music, were based on mythological themes. A work by Peri called *Dafne* dating to 1597 is generally reputed to be the first opera, written almost four hundred years ago. It was produced by a group of friends in Florence, most of whom were aristocrats, amateur poets and musicians; two were associated with the court of the powerful Medici family. Their original aim was to use music to enhance their poetry, but very quickly melody began to take precedence over their long recitative passages and opera was born. Monteverdi's *La favola d'Orfeo*, written in 1607, was the first opera to make a notable impression.

The Seventeenth & Eighteenth Centuries

Two decades later in 1637 the first public opera house was built in Venice, transferring opera from the Italian courts where it had been performed for an elite audience, to a public setting. Over the course of the seventeenth century opera became one of the leading musical traditions in Italy. Its popularity spread to other parts of Europe -- Germany, France and England in particular -- where native operatic works and composers gradually emerged, patterned after the Italian model. Among the greatest composers during the first hundred years of operatic composition were: Monteverdi, Cavalli and Scarlatti in Italy; Gluck in Germany; Lully and Rameau in France; and Purcell and Handel in England. They wrote during what is described as the Baroque period and their music is characterized by ornamentation, pomp and extravagance.

During the seventeenth century, comic *intermezzi* - light, theatrical entertainment between acts -- began to be introduced into serious opera. These intermezzi gradually developed into their own form of opera called *opera buffa* or *opera comique* - light,
sentimental operas in two acts with comic elements. These new operas captured the public's heart with their everyday realism.

The more intense opera seria - operas in three acts with "serious" plots, usually based on the mythological and historical themes - were most popular among the aristocrats. In time and after various reforms, they gained more general favor.

The question of which element would be dominant - drama, music or spectacle - was crucial in the early stages of opera's development. National preferences emerged over time. Singing played the central role in Italian operas, with composers often writing music with specific virtuoso singers in mind. In Germany, dramatic and orchestral motifs were emphasized. For the French, the spectacle of opera, and dance especially, took precedence. Ballet, like opera, had developed as a court entertainment in the seventeenth century, and with the emergence of opera, became incorporated into this new art form as well. Ballet's presence in opera generally served one of four uses: as illustration, where the dancers would mime the singers' parts; as an interlude that stood apart from the opera's action; as an integral part of the opera's plot; or as the decisive moment where the action of the opera could only proceed through the ballet. In France, Lully and Rameau were especially fond of including ballets in their works, which were described as tragédies lyriques.

Outside France, Italian opera dominated Europe until the French Revolution, when European society changed dramatically. Young composers, including Mozart, struggled to get to Italy to work. The first two centuries of opera's development reached their climax in Mozart's music, notably Le Nozze di Figaro (1786), Don Giovanni (1787) and Cosi fan tutte (1790). These were innovative for their combination of both opera buffa and opera seria traditions, and their blend of the German sense of the dramatic with the lyrical beauty of Italian music.

**ROYAL DANCER.** Costumed for his famous role in Ballet of the Night, Louis XIV sported a sun symbol on his chest, as well as a crown of plumes and sunbeams, and rays of golden light at this neck, shoulders, waist, wrists and legs.
The Nineteenth Century & Romanticism

Italian opera of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries continued to focus on the human voice. Donizetti and Bellini wrote operas that came to epitomize the Italian Romantic spirit of the 1830s. Together with Rossini, their work during the first years of the nineteenth century helped rid opera of archaic conventions and established new musical traditions. Rossini was particularly known for his comic operas, and for robust, sensuous and exhilarating music; his contribution to opera seria marked him as a notable precursor of Verdi.

In the 1850s Verdi emerged as Italy's leading composer. His operas offered expressive music with improved librettos, varied harmony and closer relationships between vocal and instrumental elements. At the same time as he was composing, his French contemporaries, such as Gounod, were writing large-scale grand opera, while the Slavic countries experienced their first flowering of opera with works by Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Moussorgsky, Smetana and Dvorak.

The Romantic movement in German opera which began in the 1850s had its roots in the late eighteenth century SINGSPIEL -- the German term for both serious and comic operas. Romantic music was emotional and subjective, allowing for greater freedom of form. Its key features were: the romantic treatment of subjects from national legend and folklore; a profound feeling for nature and the role of natural phenomena as dramatic elements in drama; the inclusion of supernatural agents as a means of dramatic development; nationalism; and a belief in the integrity of the individual.

These ideas swept through Europe influencing the work of most prominent composers. Large orchestras were used to convey consuming passions and imitate natural effects, as in Wagner's Ring Cycle. This led to the emergence of the conductor to coordinate the many facets of orchestration and singing. Wagner's notion of the music drama as the gesamtkunstwerk - the complete work of art that unified and transfigured all the arts - had a far-reaching impact. His inclusion of leitmotifs or musical themes to identify each character or recurring idea, influenced all fields of composition.

The later decades of the nineteenth century saw a reaction to Wagner's notion of the music drama in favour of realism akin to the literary style of Ibsen and Zola. Bizet in France and followers of the verismo school in Italy, worked in the shadow of Verdi and Wagner to develop such a new tradition. Composers and librettists writing in the verismo style told stories about common people, native customs, and everyday happenings. Major exponents of the school were Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Puccini. Impressionism, too, emerged in response to the Wagnerian tradition with the work of turn-of-the-century French composers Debussy, Ravel and Fauré. These composers shared the Impressionist painters' disinterest in working in a traditional style.
**The Twentieth Century**

Like all the arts, opera has experienced a variety of transformations during the twentieth century. The new idiom of the American musical comedy was born at the beginning of this century as another form of entertainment integrating drama and music. During these years operatic composition was dominated by the romantic works of Richard Strauss and the atonal operas of Schönberg and Berg. These were followed by operas written in a more traditional idiom, such as those by Britten, Menotti and Barber, as well as the atonal and experimental work of Henze and Cage. During the latter half of the twentieth century, the standard operatic repertoire was firmly established and the interpretative work of directors and producers became central to the creation of opera.

But operas continue to be written today. The COC’s Composer-in-Residence program has inspired the creation of a new opera, *Red Emma*, composed by Gary Kulesha with a libretto by Carol Bolt. It will be presented during the COC’s 1995/96 season.

*Teatro La Fenice, Venice: detail of the boxes.*
*(Teatro La Fenice, photo G. Giacomelli)*
Writing an opera is a collaborative effort between the COMPOSER, who writes the music, and the LIBRETTIST, who writes the libretto, or the lyrics to be sung to the music. Each plays a vital role in the successful marriage of music and words in opera.

The Libretto

The libretto acts as the script or text of an opera, and means literally "little book" in Italian. Writing a libretto is a special art. On paper it resembles the text of a play, except that it is often divided into brief sections according to the type of music to which it will be set by the composer. The librettist is essentially a playwright who writes text suitable for singing instead of speaking. Since it often takes more time to sing words than speak them, librettists try to limit the quantity of text, keeping the libretto concise to allow the music to make an impact. Whether the librettist invents an original story or adapts it from another source, he or she must constantly be thinking ahead to determine how the words will work with the music.

There have been very few full-time librettists in the history of opera. This is partly because there would never be enough steady work to support them, and perhaps because the librettist is often overshadowed by the composer. A librettist is likely to be a writer, playwright or poet who is chosen by a composer to produce a libretto for his or her opera. Famous librettists have included Charles Dickens, E.M. Forster, Hans Christian Andersen, Franco Zeffirelli and Catherine the Great of Russia. Some composers, like Wagner and Berlioz, have preferred to write their own librettos.

In the eighteenth century, one of the most active periods in operatic history, librettists usually drew upon ancient history and myth as a source for their work. A popular libretto may have been set to music dozens of times by different composers. Pietric
Metastasio's libretto, La clemenza di Tito, was set to music at least forty times between 1734 and 1839. In recent years, librettos have been set to music only once. Librettists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have dealt with everything from philosophy (Parsifal) to real-life incidents (Pagliacci), and adapted plays (Otello), novels (La bohème), fairy tales (Hänsel und Gretel), and even comic strips (The Cunning Little Vixen).

Reading the libretto of an opera before attending a performance was once common. Today, with the availability of guides to just about any opera and the use of projected translations above the stage (called surtitles, a Canadian innovation), librettos are used much less.

**The Score**

Writing the score or music of an opera requires not only considerable musical talent, but also a strong sense of the dramatic, because opera is more than music -- it is a form of theatre. The composer must understand how to take the words of the libretto and set them to music in a convincing manner that expresses the drama of the text. If the music does not convey the drama, then the work is simply a series of songs and musical numbers.

Because of its expressive quality, music has the power to elicit strong emotional responses to complement the story or events of an opera. Music can express several viewpoints at once through ensemble passages in duets, trios, quartets and so on. It can also underscore the mood of a scene by the tenor, speed and volume
of its melodies, whether tender or violent, fast or slow, loud or soft. By using melody alone a composer can create a character who becomes recognized by his or her music. Wagner used this technique in each of his operas, going even further to use leitmotifs to announce ideas or ideological themes. Through colouration and tone, music can create subtle nuances or strong emphases that accentuate the action of the opera’s plot, and the emotions its characters are meant to convey.

An opera’s music is written as a SCORE where notes and arrangements are recorded. The scores most often seen are those for piano, which provide arrangements for the solo piano only. These are used by the cast in the early stages of rehearsal. The full score which a conductor reads is far more extensive, including the complete details of all vocal and orchestral parts. It is organized in groups from the top of the page down: it begins with the woodwind section, then the brass, the percussion and finally the strings. Voice parts are generally placed between the violas and the cellos, or above the first violins. Soloists are placed above the chorus in descending order: soprano, mezzo soprano, tenor, baritone and bass. A page from a conductor’s score for La bohème with each of these parts is shown on p. 7.

When opera was first created in Italy it was called “dramma per musica”, meaning drama through music. Some operas seem to focus on music above all, putting the words in the background, while others are quite the reverse. Opera-lovers have often debated the relative importance of words and music (Strauss even wrote an opera dealing with that theme), but the fundamental principle of “dramma per musica” remains. This is the thread that runs through all the great operas whether Monteverdi, Handel, Wagner or Strauss.
THE ANATOMY OF AN OPERA

There are many different songs in opera. Singers may sing alone, in couples, trios, or even larger ensembles, and there are moments when no one sings at all. The following are the major musical components of an opera. Listen to the samples of each on the enclosed cassette to learn to identify each.

Aria

The ARIA is a solo performed to the accompaniment of the orchestra. It allows a character to express his or her feelings and reflect on the events of the drama. Its focus is on emotions rather than actions, and provides an opportunity for the singer to demonstrate his or her vocal or artistic skill. Some of the most successful composers of arias, like Handel, Mozart and Verdi, were able to achieve a remarkable balance between memorable melodies that perfectly suit the human voice and making the music reflect the drama of the text.

EXAMPLE 1: An aria from Rossini's The Barber of Seville (1816).

Recitative

RECITATIVE is a type of singing unique to opera when words are delivered in a way that imitates speech. It has no recognizable melody and its rhythms follow the rhythms of everyday speech. Recitative is meant to carry the action forward rather than express feeling, and can be accompanied either by a full orchestra, or, as is often the case in opera before 1800, by a harpsichord and cello.

EXAMPLE 2: A passage of recitative from Mozart's Don Giovanni (1787).

arioso

ARIOSO is something between recitative and aria. In other words, it is more tied to the rhythm of speech than an aria, but more melodic than recitative. During the nineteenth century, composers gradually abandoned the sharp distinction between the two and made more use of arioso.

EXAMPLE 3: A passage of arioso from Verdi's Otello (1887).

Ensemble

Opera includes a variety of ENSEMBLE singing, when two or more voices of different ranges come together in song. These include: DUETS (for two singers), TRIOS (for three), QUARTETS (for four), and QUINTETS (for five). In each of these, the way the composer blends the voices will depend on the dramatic requirements of the plot. For instance, in a duet if the characters are lovers, a composer may show this musically by having each sing different music, perhaps at different times, and gradually bring them together musically as the duet climaxes. Conversely, if the two characters are in conflict, their music might remain independent of one another throughout the piece.
EXAMPLE 4: A duet from Délibes’ *Lakme* (1883).
EXAMPLE 5: An ensemble from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* (1787).

**Chorus**

Most operas also include music sung by a large group of singers (often 40 or more) called a CHORUS. The chorus appears on stage most often in crowd scenes. They are usually divided into two female voice types (sopranos and mezzo-sopranos) and two male voice types (tenors and basses). The chorus can provide an often stunning contrast to solo singing.

EXAMPLE 6: The Anvil Chorus from Verdi’s *Il Trovatore* (1853).

**The Overture**

An opera usually begins with an orchestral piece of music called the OVERTURE, when the orchestra introduces the work. The overture generally includes themes that will be heard throughout the opera, and can be anywhere from five to twenty-five minutes long. Before 1800, house lights were not dimmed while the overture played, and audiences would continue to converse, drink and even play cards. This changed in the nineteenth century the overture began to take its place as an integral part of the operatic performance.

At the end of the overture, the curtain rises and the story of the opera unfolds through a series of scenes, which are organized into acts.

EXAMPLE 7: The overture to Bizet’s *Carmen* (1875).
WHO ARE THE PLAYERS?

BRINGING THE OPERA TO LIFE

By the time you arrive at the theatre and begin to read the program in anticipation of the opera you are about to see, many months of research, rehearsal and creation have already taken place to bring that performance to life. As already noted, opera is a collaborative effort that brings all the arts together in one large spectacle. Music for voice and orchestra, sets and costumes, lighting and stage effects, acting and story-telling join forces to create a single opera performance.

An opera begins with the composer and librettist who have an idea for a story they want to bring to life through music. The COMPOSER writes the score or music of the opera, while the LIBRETTIST is responsible for finding the right words to capture a specific sentiment or fit a musical phrase.

A DIRECTOR is then invited to interpret the opera. The director determines what he or she thinks the story means and how it should be presented to communicate that idea. The director decides on the staging and how the characters will interact and reveal themselves to the audience. In some cases, the setting may be changed to a different time and place to capture what the director considers the essence of the opera and highlight specific thematic elements.

The director must work closely with the DESIGNERS to create the atmosphere he or she has in mind. Set, costume and lighting designers will attempt to capture visually the essence of the director's overall concept for the production. Together sets, costumes, props and wigs will create an immediate context for the audience to interpret — whether we are witnessing an event outdoors, in a dining
room or study; whether the action is set in 1920 or 1800. With the assistance of colour and lights, nuances are fashioned that help create and reinforce the moods of specific scenes. Lighting can tell you if it is dawn or dusk, and suggest a threatening or inspired moment.

Once the director and designers have agreed on the spirit and appearance of a production, skilled craftspeople set to work to build the sets, props, costumes and accessories. SCENIC ARTISTS will begin building a set many months before it is scheduled to open, working from sketches and models provided by the designer. Similarly, members of the PROPS, WIG and WARDROBE DEPARTMENTS will begin work on the production months in advance, often recycling pieces already in their collections by altering and adjusting them to meet the current production's needs. Each prop, wig, and costume will be created in as authentic a manner possible so as to convince the audience they are witnessing events set in a particular time and place.

The singers will begin rehearsals one month before performances begin. They include the PRINCIPAL SINGERS - the soprano, the mezzo-soprano, the tenor, the baritone and the bass - as well as the comprimario singers, those who sing the smaller roles, and the opera CHORUS. As trained professionals, the singers are responsible for interpreting their musical and acting parts. In fact, when rehearsals begin they are expected to arrive having put the words and music to memory and prepared to begin the staging or blocking the production. The principal singers will work with music and language coaches to refine their vocal treatment of the music, and with the director to understand their acting roles.

The chorus is instructed and coached by the CHORUS MASTER. In addition to their roles as singers, members of the chorus are asked to perform other functions when on stage; they act and move around, sometimes dance and fight, and frequently assist with scenery changes at the same time as they sing their parts. To fill the stage and create the ambience for busy street or public scenes, SUPERNUMARIES, or "extras", are hired to attend rehearsals and performances. They receive an honorarium and donate much of their time to participate in the production.

The musicians in the orchestra also begin rehearsals well in advance of opening night. They are led by the CONDUCTOR, who interprets the actual score of the opera, deciding on the orchestration and the subtleties and nuances in the music he or she wants to stress. As well as coordinating the efforts of up to one hundred musicians in the orchestra pit, the conductor must constantly watch and cue the soloists and chorus on stage to ensure that the music and the stage action are synchronized.

The conductor's task begins long before the curtain rises opening night. He or she must meet with the director to agree on questions of interpretation, participate in rehearsals and coaching sessions with soloists, rehearse the orchestra alone, and then lead dress rehearsals. One special concern in opera is the balance between orchestra and voices; the conductor must blend and fine-tune both the quantity and the quality of the sound produced.

The musicians in the ORCHESTRA must not only be fine solo performers in their own right, but also possess the ability to blend the sound of their instruments with those of the voices. Many passages in opera pair
Hector Berlioz, after Gustave Doré
from George Martin's The Opera Companion,
drawings by Everett Raymond Kinstler.
London: John Murray, 1962

solo instruments with solo voices to create a kind of duet. Moreover, playing in an opera orchestra demands that orchestral musicians perform continuously without any opportunity for rest for long periods -- a formidable challenge to a musician's stamina!

In the offices, teams of FUNDRAISING, MARKETING and ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF work to raise money for the production, let the public know what performances are scheduled to take place when and with which artists, contract those artists, and co-ordinate the overall production of the opera. It is their job to ensure that you are aware of what the company is presenting, and that the presentation has been coordinated efficiently and within budget.

Working behind the scenes throughout the rehearsal process and backstage during performance is the STAGE MANAGER. The stage manager keeps track of all the directions that will affect the performance and communicates important details to the necessary departments. For instance, if a singer must slam a door in each performance, the stage manager will notify the scenic builders so that they are sure to reinforce its hinges. Where and when the singers move, where furniture and props are placed, where sound and lighting cues are set, are all noted in the stage manager's prompt script, which becomes a complete record of the production. Once on stage, the stage manager directs the action of the technicians and crew members who operate and create these effects.

The cooperative efforts of all these people culminate in the performance of an opera on stage. But no production is complete without one final, vital component -- the AUDIENCE. Without the response of the audience, a performance is just a rehearsal. The audience's reactions fuel the artists' performance and inform them of how well they are communicating their thoughts and emotions. Opera is above all a shared experience, and with the inclusion of the audience, months of hard work and rehearsal reach their climax.
VOCAL RANGES

Just as each person’s speaking voice has a certain range and sound, each singer’s voice falls within a certain range and possesses a unique tone or quality. And in the same way that no two people are physically identical, no two voices sound the same. There is a tremendous variety within each vocal range, which include: the soprano, the mezzo-soprano, the tenor, the baritone and the bass.

Sopranos

The sopranos are the highest of the human voices. Some are able to sing very high notes and skip through rapid passages with ease (coloratura soprano), others specialize in singing with great intensity and power (dramatic soprano). Still others have voices of exceptional beauty that can sustain long melodies (lyric soprano). Composers often write music with a particular type of soprano in mind.

EXAMPLE 8: Passages from: “Der Hölle Rache” from Mozart’s The Magic Flute (1791); “Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin” from Beethoven’s Fidelio (1805); and “Un bel di” from Puccini’s Madama Butterfly (1904).

Mezzo-sopranos

These are the lower female voices. Mezzo-sopranos have a “darker” sound and can reach low notes beneath the range of a soprano.


Tenors

The tenors are the highest male voices, and like the soprano, cover a wide variety of vocal colours. Luciano Pavarotti is an outstanding example of a “lyric tenor” with his ability to soar through melodies, while Placido Domingo exemplifies the darker-hued intensity of the “dramatic tenor”. For his opera Tannhäuser Wagner wrote for a new kind of tenor to capture the flawed nature of the hero. The “heldentenor”, whose voice was heavier than his Italian counterpart, became central to all Wagner’s later work.

EXAMPLE 10: Passages from: “La donna è mobile” from Verdi’s Rigoletto (1851); “Pourquoi me réveiller” from Massenet’s Werther (1892); and “Kleinzach” from Offenbach’s The Tales of Hoffman (1881).
**Baritones**

These are the middle male voices. Composers only began to write for this range during the nineteenth century. As with all the ranges, there are a number of vocal types of baritones. Many have extremely flexible wide-ranging voices.

**EXAMPLE 11:** Passages from: “O du mein holder Abend Stern” from Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* and “Donne miei” from Mozart’s *Cosi fan tutte* (1790).

**EXAMPLE 12:** A passage from: Seneca’s death scene in Monteverdi’s *The Coronation of Poppea* (1642).

**Basses**

The lowest of all voice types, the bass has a rich sound particularly suited to the wise, older characters in the opera. Composers often challenge basses by writing notes at the extreme low end of their range which only a talented few can reach.

Each of these voices described has come to represent certain roles in an opera. The sopranos tend to play the heroines, while the mezzos are given the seductress or villainess roles. Tenors play the heroes or young men, while the baritones are the older, often villainous characters. Basses are either very villainous or very wise and stately.

*Pol Plançon in the bass role of Ramfis in Verdi’s Aida,*
*cartoon by tenor Enrico Caruso*
THE MAKINGS
OF AN ORCHESTRA

An orchestra is an ensemble of instruments made up of four families of music: the STRING, WOODWIND, BRASS and PERCUSSION. Since the nineteenth century, the symphony orchestra has included one hundred instruments and symphonic music has been composed with this in mind. In opera, the orchestra provides the foundation for the singers, often playing harmonies to accompany particular arias or underscoring particular musical passages. Each instrument in the orchestra represents a particular range of sound: the smaller the instrument, the higher its pitch; the larger the instrument, the lower its range.

The String Family

The string section is considered the heart of the orchestra and includes the VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO and DOUBLE BASS. Each of these instruments have four strings that are made to vibrate by drawing a bow across them or by plucking.

THE VIOLIN: The violin is the highest-pitched of the string instruments often compared to the human voice for its singing tone. It usually carries the melody of the music and is the most agile of the string family in moving from soft to loud, and slow to fast passages. It rests on the musician’s shoulder as it is played.

THE VIOLA: The viola is slightly larger than the violin with a lower sound. Its strings are longer, thicker and heavier, and it is often played to “double” or reinforce another part by playing the same notes an octave higher or lower. It too is played from the musician’s shoulder.

THE CELLO: The cello is larger than both the violin and viola and must be played from a seated position. Like the violin, the cello usually carries the melody, but its deeper resonances provide a rich complement to the violin’s voice.

THE DOUBLE BASS: The double bass, also called the “bass viol”, is the largest of the string instruments. It stands almost six feet tall, and has the lowest range in the string section. The double bass supports the sound of the entire orchestra by playing the bass part of the harmony.
The Woodwind Family

The woodwind family, so called because all its members were made of wood originally, is comprised of the FLUTE, OBOE, CLARINET and BASSOON. These are pipes of varying lengths with a mouthpiece that air is blown through, and holes that are either opened or closed to force the air to vibrate and create varying sounds.

THE FLUTE: The flute is the soprano of the woodwinds and is held and played horizontally. Today it is made of silver alloy rather than wood with open and closed ends. The player blows into the mouthpiece at the open end to create a smooth and clear high pitch which can be heard above the orchestra.

THE OBOE: The oboe has a lower voice than the flute, with a mouthpiece that is a double reed of two slips of cane bound together to leave a small passage for air. The end of the oboe is shaped like a bell, which amplifies the sound as it goes out. Because the air is so focussed, the tone of the oboe is very intense and is generally described as having a "reedy" sound played for nostalgic moods. Because its pitch is clear and seldom varies, the oboe sounds the tuning "A" for the other instruments when they are warming up before a performance.

THE CLARINET: Larger again than the oboe, the clarinet has a single reed that makes a clear and strong sound. It has 20-22 holes which allow the player to manipulate its voice, and because of its wide range is often favoured for playing the melody.

THE BASSOON: The largest member of the woodwind family is the bassoon, which measures as much as eight feet long. Like the oboe, the bassoon has a double-reed and a thick, low register with a wide range. The bassoon can create humorous effects by making big jumps between octaves.
The Brass Family

The brass family is made up the FRENCH HORN, TRUMPET, TROMBONE and TUBA. Each of these has a cup-shaped mouthpiece and a tube that flares into a bell-shaped opening. Horns and trumpets are among the oldest instruments. They have been used historically for religious and military ceremonies, and until the advent of metal, were made from animal horns and tusks. To move from one pitch to another on today's brass instruments involves both mechanical steps using valves and slides, and lip and breath pressure.

THE FRENCH HORN: A descendant of the hunting horn, the French horn has a beautiful golden sound that lends itself to mysterious and wistful, or noble and majestic musical passages. Originally a long, straight horn, its design changed over time into a winding horn that was more easily handled. Three valves are depressed in variations to create specific notes.

THE TRUMPET: The trumpet is the soprano of the brass family and announces moments of ceremony and strength. It too is descended from a long, straight horn which became redesigned to curl. It has three valves to define notes, and can be muted to create different sounds -- a technique often used by jazz musicians.

THE TROMBONE: The trombone, Italian for "large trumpet", was the first brass instrument to be perfected and combines the majesty of the French horn with the ceremony of the trumpet. It has a long, narrow horn with a movable slide to create the notes, although trombones with valves now exist.

THE TUBA: The tuba is the biggest, deepest and youngest of the brass instruments. If its tube were outstretched to its full length it would measure anywhere from 12-18 feet long. Like the double bass and bassoon, it provides the foundation for the orchestra's harmony.
The Percussion Family

The percussion family is made up of many different instruments that create a sound by either being struck or shaken. Drums are the best known of these, creating a vibration or rhythm by striking a stretched skin. Percussive instruments add colour and rhythm to music by accentuating certain passages. They fall into two categories: those which have a variable pitch and can be tuned, such as the TIMPANI or KETTLEDRUMS, XYLOPHONE and MARIMBA; and those which create a single sound of indefinite pitch, such as SNARE DRUMS, TAMBOURINES and CYMBALS. Each creates a dramatic sound at strategic moments in the music.

Three other well-known instruments should be noted which do not belong to any of these families but are often played with the orchestra. These are the HARP, the PIANO and the ORGAN. They are enjoyed for their distinctive tones which carry, and often, define the melody of an orchestral piece.

Today there are synthesizers and computer equipment that can imitate the tones of a complete string, woodwind, brass or percussive section. But they can not duplicate the sensation of sitting in a theatre and feeling it burst into sound as a complete orchestra fills it with music. Like singers, talent and tremendous discipline are required to play an instrument well, and musicians train for years to develop their skill and dexterity. While there will always be room for new innovations in music, the beauty and musicianship involved in learning to play acoustic instruments will hold a special place in the world of creating music.

OPERATIC AND MUSICAL TERMS

A CAPPELLA - vocal music without instrumental accompaniment

ARIA - a song for one singer, often reflective in nature

ARIOSO - aria-like, lyrical and expressive passage or fragment

BEL CANTO - "beautiful singing", a term usually applied to the period of Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti, when a highly exhibitionist style of singing was practiced

CHORUS - a group of singers who act and sing together as a unit

COLORATURA - ornamental vocal music where several notes are sung for each syllable of the text

COMPOSER - the individual who writes music

CONDUCTOR - the musical director of the orchestra

DUET - a musical piece written for two singers

ENSEMBLE - concerted singing by a number of performers

FINALE - the final musical number of an opera

LEGATO - flowing transition from one note to another

LIBRETTIST - the individual who writes the libretto of an opera

LIBRETTO - the words of the opera set to the composer’s music

OCTAVE - the distance between one tone of a scale and the next higher or lower tone of similar pitch; for instance middle C and the C above middle C are an octave apart

OVERTURE - the introductory musical passage played by the orchestra

PITCH - the highness or lowness of sound

RECITATIVE - a type of singing unique to opera when words are delivered in a way that imitates speech

SCALE - music arranged in order of rising pitches

SCORE - music in written form with all the parts set down in relation to each other

TEMPO - the speed at which a piece of music moves

TIMBRE - the quality of tone
GETTING YOUR ACT TOGETHER

Leave your props behind!

Please leave all your bags, cameras, radios, food or drinks at the coat check, since they do not belong in the theatre. Camera flashes can distract a performer and disrupt the flow of a scene. Munching and drinking can disrupt and annoy your neighbours, as well as create a mess in the seating area.

Don't miss your cue!

Timing is important in every performance. Make sure you arrive at your seat on time. Once the performance begins, you can not be seated until intermission. And remember that the next person is as anxious to hear what is going on as you are, so please listen attentively and wait until intermission to share your comments with your friends.

Play your part!

Opera is spectacle. Your presence in the audience is essential to complete the whole experience. Enjoy the performance and respond to what you see. Unlike television or film, every live performance is unique. Only you and the performers and musicians will share the experience you have in the theatre. Your warmth and good humour are important to them, so when you like something, tell them with your applause.

Illustration by Everett Raymond Kinstler, from George Martin's The Opera Companion, London: John Murray, 1962