



ARIZONA OPERA
EDUCATION

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna

The world's first mariachi opera!

Teacher's Guide and Resource Book

Dear Educator,

Welcome to Arizona Opera! We are thrilled that you and your students are joining us for *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, the world's first mariachi opera.

At Arizona Opera, we strive to help students find and explore their voices. We believe that providing opportunities to explore the performing arts, allows students to explore the world around them.

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna is a relevant theatrical event about the world we live in right here, right now. By preparing your students for this opera, you are setting them up to get the most out of their experience of this important, new work.

This study guide is designed to efficiently provide the information you need to prepare your students for the opera. At the end of this guide, there are a few suggestions for classroom activities that connect your students' experience at the opera to Arizona language arts and fine arts standards. These activities are designed for many different grade levels, so please feel free to customize and adapt these activities to meet the needs of your individual classrooms.

Parking for buses and vans is provided outside Symphony Hall. Buses may begin to arrive at 5:30pm and there will be a preshow lecture at 6:15pm. The performance begins at 7:00pm.

Again, we look forward to having you at the opera and please contact me at jborths@azopera.org or at (602)218-7325 with any questions.

Best,

Joshua Borths
Education Manager
Arizona Opera

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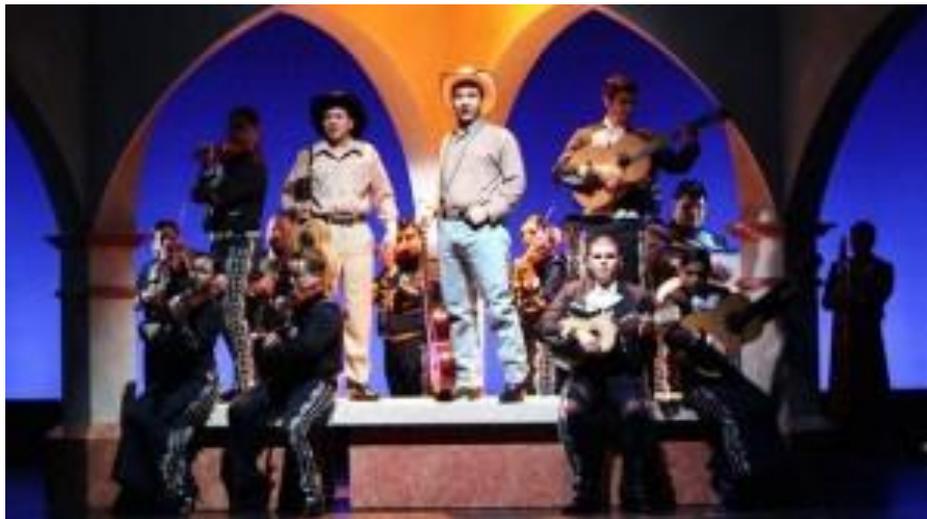
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Audience Etiquette: Attending the Opera

Unlike the actors on your television, performers on the stage are aware of their audience and want very much to communicate their art to you. By the time you arrive for a scheduled performance, many people (composers, singers, musicians, technicians, costume, set and lighting designers, etc.) have worked very hard to bring you their best efforts.

In order to show respect for those efforts, every audience member must give the performance their full attention and avoid any behavior that interferes with the performance.

We have rules that help us accomplish this goal, and you should do your best to understand and follow them:

- 1) Turn off your cell phone and anything else you have that might beep, ring, buzz or make any sort of noise during the performance.
- 2) No shoving or running in the theater.
- 3) No recording of any kind allowed in the performance.
- 4) Show your appreciation by laughing, applauding, etc.
- 5) However, keep your reactions appropriate and do not disrupt the flow of the performance.
- 6) No talking or whispering during the performance.
- 7) No gum, candy, or food in the theater.
- 8) Once the performance begins, you must stay in your seat.



Production Credits



Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán Music Director	José “Pepe” Martínez
Stage Director	Leonard Foglia
Choreographer	Keturah Stickann
Laurentino , the grandfather	Octavio Moreno
Renata , his wife	Cecilia Duarte
Mark , Laurentino’s second son	Brian Shircliffe
Diana , Mark’s daughter	Brittany Wheeler
Rafael , Laurentino’s first son	David Guzman
Lupita , Renata’s friend	Vanessa Cerda-Alonzo
Chucho , Laurentino’s friend	Saúl Ávalos
Victor , A smuggler	Juan Mejia

Production Information

- The Houston Grand Opera commissioned *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* in 2010 to commemorate the Mexican War of Independence in 1810 and the Mexican Revolution in 1910.
- This piece has only been performed only five times ... You are among the first in the world to see it!
- This opera, written by José “Pepe” Martínez and Leonard Foglia, is the first piece of its kind. *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* combines authentic mariachi, opera, and theater into a seamless evening of entertainment.
- Unlike most operas, the orchestra is on the stage with the performers, and Mariachi Vargas is the mariachi performing this opera!
- Mariachi Vargas is the oldest, continuously performing mariachi in the world.
- This opera (for lack of a better term) is performed in both Spanish and English with projected words (called supertitles) above the stage.
- The production runs about 90 minutes with no intermission.



Synopsis

Every year, the monarch butterfly migrates from North America to Mexico. The journey, which spans thousands of miles, is difficult and long.

This great, butterfly migration is a prominent metaphor in *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna (To Cross the Face of the Moon)*. Through the story, this piece asks, “Where is home? Is home where you begin the journey, or where you end it?”

At the beginning of the opera, we meet Laurentino Velasquez, a Mexican immigrant. As he dies, Laurentino’s American son, Mark, and granddaughter, Diana, comfort him. Laurentino recalls his first wife, the beautiful Renata. Laurentino was married to Renata before marrying Mark’s mother. Laurentino, in a daze, reveals that he has a son in Mexico and mistakes Diana, his granddaughter, for Renata, his first love.

We immediately plunge into the past, and we see Laurentino marry Renata. They are young, vibrant, and optimistic about the future. However, to make a better life for his family, Laurentino decides to cross the Mexican border with his friend, Chucho.

Back in the present, Laurentino’s health declines, and Mark struggles with the reality that he has a brother he has never met. Should he reach out to his brother, Rafael, before it’s too late?

Renata and Lupita, Chucho's wife, struggle with life in Mexico without their husbands beside them. However, while they are both faced with the same difficulty, they have come to different conclusions. Lupita believes that the hardship is worth it since the money Chucho sends money back allows her family to live in comfort. Renata, however, cannot quite see it that way. She wants nothing more than to reunite her family.

So, Renata takes matters into her own hands. She chooses to pay a smuggler, Victor, to bring her and her young son, Rafael, to the United States. However, Renata has a secret. Renata is pregnant and wants her second child to be born in the United States, no matter the cost. They are over halfway to the border when her pregnancy is revealed, but it is too late to turn back. Renata dies in the barren desert that separates the United States from Mexico—the face of the moon.

Diana also decides to take matters into her own hands. She reaches out to her uncle, Rafael, who was returned to the village in Mexico by Victor after the death of his mother, Renata.

After his own struggle with the truth, Rafael accepts Diana’s invitation to meet his father in Houston, and the family is united for the first—and final—time.

Laurentino, finally at peace, sees himself as one of the monarch butterflies. His dying wish is to be buried where the butterflies end their long journey south of the border. So, after a long and hard life full of both great joy and deep pain, Laurentino’s reunited family takes him home... at last.

About the Composer

José Martínez was born on June 27, 1941, in Tecalitlán, Jalisco, Mexico and began expressing himself musically as a child, singing on the buses in Guadalajara at 10 years old.

Martínez joined his first mariachi band as a violin player at 12, and at the age of 13 played in an official Mexican military band for three years. Soon, he began experimenting with writing his own music. In 1966, Martínez formed his own mariachi ensemble called Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlán. He went on a musical tangent, rearranging excerpts from operas, arias and movie themes. His writing style was also influenced by music written by composers and arrangers of the prestigious Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán.

Nuevo Tecalitlán became one of the most dynamic sounding mariachi bands in Mexico throughout the mid-1960s and early 1970s and Martínez's arrangements became his band's signature. The group's albums were dedicated to pioneering a different, full sound for mariachi bands and included popular instrumentals and classical excerpts like Beethoven's 9th symphony "Himno a la Alegría" ("Ode to Joy"). Martínez's popurrís (medleys), however, were what caught the attention of his colleagues and peers in other mariachi ensembles.

In 1975, Jesus Rodríguez de Hajar, the sitting music director of Mariachi Vargas, retired and Martínez was invited for an audition. He was selected and joined Mariachi Vargas that same year. By the late 1970s, Mariachi Vargas was in high demand and José Martínez had written his first arrangements for a solo artist, a female rising star named Rocio Durcal.

Many mariachi music aficionados considered the genres' "glory years" to be over by this time, but Martínez is still able to awe audiences with his interpretation of the Mexican spirit.

Mariachi Vargas once again raised the bar in mariachi music in 1986 with the release of the album *Mexicanísimo*, which contained three original songs written by a musically mature José Martínez. "Violín Huapango," "Lluvia De Cuerdas" and "Mexicanísimo" became some of the most popular and most requested songs within the circuit of mariachi musicians throughout the world at the time.

In 2010, the Houston Grand Opera commissioned *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* as part of an initiative to break down barriers in the arts. Martínez worked with Leonard Foglia, an American director, librettist, and novelist, to complete the project. *Cruzar* was well received, bridging the gap between mariachi and opera with the passionate musical storytelling critical to both.

Martínez is still writing, learning, and performing. He continues to play with Mariachi Vargas, now performing together with his son, "Pepe Jr.," who joined the group in 1993.

Brief Overview of Mariachi

Mariachi is the most popular form of Mexican folk music. But, like many folk traditions here in the United States, the origins and history of the art form are difficult to uncover.

However, with a little knowledge of Mexican history, we can begin to see glimpses of the origins of mariachi. When the Spanish colonized North America, the diseases they brought with them decimated the native populations. In order to replace the labor force that the Spanish destroyed, the Spanish brought slaves from Africa and the Caribbean to Mexico. Out of these cultures—the surviving, native Mexicans, the Spanish, and the Afro-Caribbean people—new musical forms began to emerge.

The song forms and instruments of the native peoples assimilated with the harmonic structures and language of the Spanish. The Afro-Caribbean populations supplied the complex, rhythmic structures that are found in mariachi. These three cultures influenced one another, and the vibrant energy and distinctive sound of the mariachi is the result of these diverse cultural influences.

As the mariachi ensembles travelled across Mexico, each region adopted its own unique set of conventions and idiosyncrasies. Different regions began to develop their own distinct musical ideas. This created a patchwork of different traditions across Mexico. However, in the early 20th century, mariachi began to unify. At that time, there was a great migration to Mexican cities, and this fact, partnered with the growing popularity of recordings, aided the growth and unification of mariachi throughout the first half of the 20th century.



It was during this time that Mariachi Vargas—the same group who will be performing in *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*—began to establish themselves as one of the premiere mariachi, and by 1950, mariachi achieved a golden age due to the booming record and film industries, and the growing sense of national pride that spread across Mexico.

The story of mariachi started as a mixture of different regional styles, and while many regional traditions are still honored, there are certain elements of mariachi that have become standardized today.

Costumes

The *traje de charro de gala* (TRA-he day CHA-ro day Ga-la) is the uniform of mariachi. This suit was once worn by upper-class, rodeo riders, but was adopted by musicians to endow them with perceived higher, social status. The rich cowboys were furious, but now, this *charro* suit is ubiquitous with mariachi. In fact, it is such a part of the mariachi tradition that mariachi are judged on both their sound and fashion sense.

Instruments

There are very specific instruments that are used to create the distinctive mariachi sound. The **rhythm section**—which remember is incredibly important due to the Afro-Caribbean influence on mariachi—is made up of five instruments:

***Guitar**

***Harp**

***Vihuela**

a smaller, five-stringed, guitar like instrument



***Guitarrón**

an oversized vihuela



***Trumpet**

the only non-string mariachi instrument



The melody of a mariachi song is played by the **violins**.

All members of a mariachi are expected to sing and all mariachi are expected to improvise and occasionally take front and center with a solo, not unlike an American jazz combo.

Song Forms

When it comes to the songs mariachi sing, don't be fooled by upbeat music. Many of the classic mariachi songs are sad. These songs were used to share stories of personal loss or national folklore. Like the evening news of today, mariachi was used to broadcast the news around Mexico. Some of the most important song forms—and the song types you will hear in *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*—include:

***Son** (sown)—Distinguished by exciting, syncopated rhythms and is the most common song form.

***Jarabe** (har-AB-ay)—Declared the national dance and is best known in the United States as the “Mexican Hat Dance”

***Ranchera** (rawn-CHE-ra)—Similar to American country because the *ranchera* is usually a song about heartbreak and other extreme emotions.

Border Ballads

Mexican Americans held on to their identities in part through a new type of music—the *corrido* or border ballad—in the 20th century when the borderlands between the United States and Mexico were once again torn by political and social instability. Shaped by hard times and long distances, these storytelling songs were much like musical newspapers and carried news of current events and popular legends around the border

region, also called *la frontera* (la fron-TER-a). Passed from one singer to another, many of these songs survive to the present day.

In addition to these three major forms, there are many countless others with their own unique characteristics.

Dances

Each song form has a *folklórico* (folk) dance that accompanies it. In fact, some of the dances, such as the *balero*, are as famous as the music itself!

Mariachi as Opera

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna is the world's first mariachi opera, and, although it's not immediately apparent, mariachi and opera have a lot in common. As mentioned previously, almost all mariachi songs (or *cancones*) tell stories, and opera is just a longer form of musical storytelling!



Also, when the Spanish came over to the New World, they brought their music with them. This included the classical style of singing and music theory. This style of singing and harmony are used in European, classical music. This operatic style of music and singing is a fundamental part of mariachi!

So, both opera and mariachi are forms of musical story telling that rely on the same vocal techniques and harmonies. Of course, there are many differences such as the song forms (or structure) and instruments (or orchestration). But with a little imagination (like in *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*), these differences are overcome to create a wonderful and innovative piece of theater that is about what we all share and the commonalities that unite us all.

Conclusion

Mariachi is a complex folk tradition that continues to thrive hundreds of years after its creation, and there is no doubt that mariachi will continue to evolve in the 21st century. After all, no party in Mexico is complete without a mariachi.

Today, mariachi is even being played in the opera house!

Mariachi's future is bright indeed.

Immigration Station

Immigration is a hot-button issue in the United States. Our country was founded with the idea that people from all walks of life and all countries, races, religions and creeds could come here and be welcome.

Read the following vocabulary *palabras* (words) to learn more about immigration.

Complete the activities that go along with this section.

Immigration- The movement of people from one country to another. Often these groups of people settle permanently in another country.

Immigrant- A person who leaves his or her homeland to settle permanently in a new country.

- 1) Do you know someone who is from another country? _____
- 2) Where are they from? _____

Push factors- Factors that “push” people out of their homeland and cause them to move to another country. Some factors are environmental disaster such as famines, floods, hurricanes, mudslides and volcanic eruptions. Others include poverty and human rights abuses.

- 1) What factors might push people out of Mexico and into the United States?

- 2) What factors do you think pushed Laurentino out of Mexico?

Pull factors- Factors that “pull” people to move to another country permanently. Some examples are the expectation of a better life, better paying jobs and more opportunities for employment, education, family members who already live in the country and religious freedom.

- 1) What factors pull people into the United States?

Ethnic groups- Groups of people who share the same cultural values or characteristics such as the same language, food, customs, clothing, history, holidays, etc.

1) What ethnic group are you a part of? What are some of your traditions?

Waves of immigration- Large groups of people often from the same country or ethnic group immigrate to a new country. In the United States there were large “waves of immigration” from Europe in the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. An example would be when millions of people left Ireland to come to the United States because of the potato famine.

Statue of Liberty- A gift to the United States from France and was presented on July 4, 1884. It sits on Liberty Island in the New York Harbor. It was dedicated to symbolize the friendship between the two nations. To the world, it is a symbol of liberty and the desire to be free. In the past, many immigrants would see the Statue of Liberty when they first arrived by boat to the United States. Today it is still one of America’s most popular tourist attractions.

This is the excerpt of Emma Lazarus’ poem “The New Colossus” which is printed on the plaque at the Statue of Liberty...

“... GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR,
YOUR HUDDLED MASSES, YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE,
THE WRETCHED REFUSE OF YOUR TEEMING SHORE,
SEND THESE, HOMELESS, TEMPEST-TOST TO ME,
I LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE GOLDEN DOOR!

1) Who are the “tired, poor, huddled masses” in this poem?

2) What you think “tempest-tost” means?

3) What is the “golden door” referring to?

4) What does this poem say to people coming to the United States?

5) Do you think that the United States still feels this way about people coming into the country? Why or why not?

Passport- An official government document that certifies one’s identity and citizenship and permits a citizen to travel abroad.

Visa- In the United States, a visa allows you to enter the country at the border. There are two categories of U.S. visas—immigrant and nonimmigrant. Immigrant visas are for people who intend to live permanently in the U.S. Nonimmigrant visas are for people with permanent residence outside the U.S., but who wish to be here on a temporary basis for tourism, medical treatment, business, temporary work or study.

Green card- Formerly a green colored card, a green card is an official document issued by the U.S. government to “aliens” allowing them to work in this country legally.

Alien- Owing political allegiance to another country or government; foreign. Also an unnaturalized, foreign resident of a country. Also call a noncitizen.

- 1) What do you think of the term “alien” being used to describe people who are noncitizens?

- 2) Even if you were born here you may still encounter a situation where you feel like an outsider. Have you ever felt like an “alien?” What was the situation?

Naturalization- To grant full citizenship to one of foreign birth.

- 1) Part of becoming a citizen is to take a test about U.S. history. Here are some sample questions. Without studying, how many of these questions can you answer?

- *How many stars are on the flag? _____
- *What color are the stars on our flag? _____
- *What do the stars mean? _____
- *How many stripes are there on the flag? _____
- *What date is the Day of Independence? _____
- *Independence from whom? _____
- *What country did we fight during the Revolutionary War? _____
- *Who was the first president of the United States? _____
- *What do we call a change of the constitution? _____

Assimilation- To bring to a likeness or to conformity; to cause a resemblance between; to become similar or like something else.

Butterfly Connections

Background

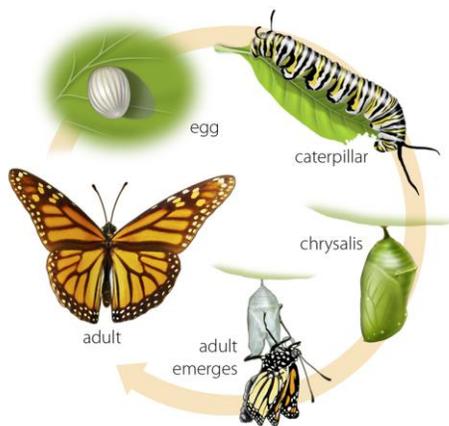
Every year, the monarch butterfly migrates from the Northern United States to the forests of Mexico. They travel 2,500 miles every year to winter south of the US/Mexico border. They migrate because the monarch cannot survive the cold winters in the north.

Imagine that you are that butterfly. You must journey from one end of a continent to the other. What will you see? Who will you meet? What will you learn?



Objective

With permission from your school and parents, set up pen pals with a classroom in Mexico. Reliable websites such as <http://studentsoftheworld.info/> or <http://www.pen-pal.com/> are a great way to find appropriate, reliable pen pals. With the help of these or other resources, make contact with a classroom at one end of the monarch's journey.



Procedure and Evaluation

*Make contact with a class in either Canada or Latin America.

*Write a letter to a student in the corresponding class. The first letter should introduce the student and explain a little bit about their life in Arizona.

*After exchanging several emails/letters, write a short reflection essay about the experience. Here are a list of questions to consider when writing this reflection:

- What did you learn about the other culture?
- What surprised you?
- Were there any difficulties that you did not anticipate?

Ways you will adapt this activity to your school:

Family History

Background

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna is about family and home. Where is home? Who is our family? Are they the group we are born into or the friends we make ourselves? What happens when we don't know about our family?



Objective

Everyone's family is different and the stories we tell make our families unique. However, we rarely take the time to learn about our families and embrace the stories that make us who we are today.

By interviewing the oldest member of your family, learn about your past and start to think about how it shapes your future.

Procedure

*Either on the phone or in person, interview the oldest, living member of your family.

*Take detailed notes on the conversation. Interview him or her about where your family came from, what life was like when he or she was little, what was his or her favorite childhood memory, etc.

*Create a timeline of your family member's life. Include photo research if appropriate.

*Finally, using the timeline as an outline, create a short story based on the life of your family member. You do not have to write about your family member exactly, but let the life of your family member inspire you to create your story. Explore what your main character wants out of life, what obstacles are in his or her way, and how he or she will go about achieving that goal.



Opera Review

What is opera?

An **opera** is a musical drama or comedy where the actors sing rather than speak their lines. The word “opera” derives from the Latin word *opus*, which literally means “a work of art.” Like a play, an opera is performed on a stage with singing-actors, scenery, make-up and lighting.

Opera is truly a **multi-disciplinary art**, which means it is a combination of many art forms (singing, orchestral music, theater, visual arts, dance, etc.) and subject areas (history, mythology, literature, etc.). Opera combines these disciplines in a very powerful way to tell a story. Opera can be funny, sad, scary, dramatic, mysterious, fantastical, or any combination of feelings and moods.



The **libretto** (meaning “little book” in Italian) contains all of the words of an opera. A libretto is usually shorter than the script for a play because it takes longer to sing lines than to say them, and because music is also a very important part of telling the story of an opera. The person who writes the words for an opera is often a poet or playwright and is called a **librettist**.

The **composer** writes the music for the opera. All of the music, both vocal (for singers) and orchestral (for instrumentalists) is written in the **score** which separates lines for each instrument and each singer’s vocal part. The score, as a piece of music, reflects the mood, events and emotions of the characters in the story.

Characters are the people in the story. Singers perform the parts of the characters, also called **roles**.

The Performers

Soprano- The highest female voice. She is often the heroine of the opera and often in love with the tenor. A star soprano is often referred to as the “Prima Donna.”

Mezzo-Soprano- The lower female voice. The mezzo sound is typically darker and warmer than the soprano. The mezzo usually plays the older female character (like the mother), the bad guy (the witch), a seductress, or a boy. When the mezzo plays a male character, it is called a **pants** role.



Tenor- The highest male voice. He usually plays the hero of the opera and is often in love with the soprano.

Baritone- The lower (or middle) male voice. The baritone is often the villain, but can also be the hero who sacrifices himself for the tenor or soprano. In comedies, the baritone is

often a prankster. He is usually in love with the soprano but loses her to the tenor.
Bass- The lowest male voice. He often plays the wise man or comic buffoon.

Orchestra- The group of instrumentalists who accompany the singers. They play under the stage in the orchestra pit where they are less likely to overpower the singers and distract from the action on the stage. However, though they are often not seen, the orchestra is an equal partner in the action of an opera.

Chorus- The group of singers who function as a unit onstage. Choruses are usually featured in crowd scenes where they represent the townspeople, partiers, soldiers, etc.

Dancers- Dance is often included in opera. They are usually part of big crowd scenes, but can also be featured as soloists in some pieces. Many operas contain short ballet sequences.

Production Team

Conductor- The person in charge of the musical interpretation of the opera. He also guides the orchestra through the opera from the first rehearsal to final performance.

Director- Responsible for the overall look or concept of the production. The director determines how the opera will be interpreted and tells everyone on stage when, where and how to move. Finally, he or she guides the performers on how characters are best presented.

Choreographer- Designs and sets the movement of the dancers.

Costume Designer- Designs and creates the clothes singers wear to reflect aspects of the character played by the singer. Costumes should reveal a lot about a character. How old they are, what kind of person they are, what time period he or she lives in, etc.



Scenic Designer- Creates the visual background and set pieces for the opera. He or she creates small models and detailed blueprints which serve as the “instructions” for building the set.

Lighting Designer- Creates the lighting plan that emphasizes the drama of the moment and allows the audience to focus on the action. Lighting design is an important visual element that contributes to the ambience of the stage setting and affects the appearance of people, costumes and props onstage.

Stage Manager- Coordinates all of the elements of the show during rehearsal and performance. He or she is responsible for calling cues, scene changes, and organizing the backstage area so that the show runs smoothly and consistently.

Crew- This group of professionals is responsible for setting up and running all of the equipment for a performance, including changing the scenery, costumes, and props. They also open and close the curtain, operate trapdoors, run sound effects, and run quick costume changes.

What makes an opera?

Opera is a **musical** form. The **orchestra** provides the overriding musical texture, while the **singers** sing and act on the stage.

An **overture** is the piece of music played by the orchestra at the beginning of an opera. It usually, but not always, contains some of the musical themes from the opera and sets the mood for what the audience is about to experience.

Recitative (re-chi-ta-TEEV)- Is sung dialogue that propels the action forward. The singing is generally faster and is composed to sound more like speech.

Aria- An extended musical passage sung as a solo. It often explores emotions as a character absorbs, reflects, and makes decisions in the drama.

Duet- An extended musical passage for two singers. A **trio** is for three singers and a **quartet** is a piece for four singers.

Ensemble- An extended musical passage for more than four voices. Often each character is singing different words at the same time, and ensembles tend to occur at the most pivotal point in the drama or the end of an act.

Supertitles- Since operas are most often performed in the language in which they were composed, most opera productions have translations above the stage (or on the seat in front of you) where a translation is projected for the audience to understand and better follow the story.



Other opera terms to know!

Bel canto- Literally meaning “beautiful singing,” this term describes the specific style of vocal production that opera utilizes. It requires great breath control and ease.

Bravo- Literally, “brave” or “courageous,” this Italian word is a form of high praise that is shouted at times when applause is appropriate. **Bravo** is shouted when a man has sung thrillingly, and **brava** when a woman has done the same.

Cadenza- A brilliant passage in an aria—often improvised by the singer—that showcases the specific skills and strengths of that singer. **Cadenzas** are most often sung by women, although men can perform them as well.

Diva- Literally, “goddess,” refers to an important female opera star. The masculine form is **divo**.

Motif or Leitmotif (light-mo-teef)- While “leitmotif” is usually used to refer to the musical themes of Wagner, a *motif* is a recurring musical idea that reveals or recalls an earlier plot point, character, emotion, or idea in an opera. Keep an eye out for music that sounds familiar! It probably means something important!

Tempo- This refers to the speed at which music is performed. The conductor is in charge of setting the **tempo** or timing of an opera.

Cover/understudy- This is the person who learns a role, music and staging just in case the lead cannot perform due to sickness or injury... as we say in the theater, “The show must go on!”



***Thank you for Houston Grand Opera, the Atlanta Opera, and Central City Opera for their help in creating this study guide.**