



PRESENTS

THE ATLANTA OPERA

WEST SIDE STORY



2018-2019

FIELD TRIP EDUCATOR GUIDE

Dear Educators,

Welcome to ArtsBridge’s 2018-19 Field Trip Season! We are thrilled to present The Atlanta Opera’s production of *West Side Story*.

The Atlanta Opera’s production of *West Side Story* is a part of Leonard Bernstein at 100. Leonard Bernstein at 100 is the world-wide celebration of the 100th birthday of Leonard Bernstein, the composer, conductor, educator, musician, cultural ambassador, and humanitarian, officially beginning on August 25, 2017, Bernstein’s 99th birthday, and continuing through his 100th year until August 25, 2019.

This will be the first opera experience for many of your students and will be most fully enjoyed with a bit of preparation before they arrive at the theater. This guide has been developed to acquaint both you and your students with *West Side Story* as well as to familiarize students with the world of opera (vocabulary, history, etc.) Our goal is to provide you with an innovative, multidisciplinary approach to teaching required skills and curriculum, including Georgia Performance standards and national arts standards.

Thank you again for sharing this experience with your students. We value your feedback and we use it when planning future community engagement programs. We welcome comments from you, your students, and/or administration following the performance. It is our sincere hope that you enjoy the performance, and look forward to seeing you and your students at the opera!

We look forward to inspiring and educating your students through the arts on November 2nd, 2018 at the world-class Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre!

See you at the theatre,

The Atlanta Opera and The ArtsBridge Team

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ABOUT COBB ENERGY PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE



The landmark Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre is a cultural, entertainment and special events venue of a national significance. Atlanta’s first major performing arts facility in four decades, Cobb Energy Centre boasts state-of-the art systems, amenities and design features that allow the expression of any artistic idea and captivate performers, patrons and event planners. The Centre’s strong suit is versatility. It can accommodate events as diverse as Broadway, concerts, corporate functions, private parties and family entertainment.

The Centre’s distinctive façade and three-story lobby – highlighted by a 65-foot, floor-to-ceiling glass curtain wall – offer visitors a grand welcome and stunning introduction to a venue of great warmth, elegance and possibilities. Nothing speaks “special occasion” like the majestic lobby – a gathering space and promenade with two grand staircases, specially designed, colored-glass chandeliers and walls of Venetian plaster.

The Centre’s 2,750-seat John A. Williams Theatre captures the richness and intimacy of vintage theatres. Yet, it incorporates modern touches and technology – including advanced sound, lighting and acoustical elements – that allow fine-tuning for each performance. With equal poise, the Theatre can host concerts, opera, drama, comedy, lectures, dance and spoken word.

The Cobb Energy Centre is a premier location for black-tie balls, galas, wedding receptions, corporate meetings, banquets, bar and bat mitzvahs, and parties.

- 10,000-square-foot ballroom, divisible into 3 sections, holds up to 630 for a seated meal, 800 in theatre setting and up to 650 for a reception
- 2,750-seat theater ideal for graduations or general sessions
- Unique special event spaces on theater stage, 3-level lobby, and outdoor terrace

The Centre is equipped to ensure ArtsBridge’s vision of making sure everyone has access to arts experiences. Designated seats in various locations are available at every event for guests with disabilities and those needing special assistance. The venue is equipped with wheelchair accessible restrooms, elevators, plaza ramps, wheelchair accessible ticket windows, phonic ear devices, wheelchair accessible drinking fountains, and handicapped parking. Please call for more information about this and sign language interpreted performances.

DID YOU KNOW?

- More than 250,000 patrons visit the Cobb Energy Centre each year.
- The Cobb Energy Centre opened in 2007.
- The Cobb Energy Centre has two main spaces:
 - John A. Williams Theatre, 2,750 seats
 - Kessel D. Stelling Ballroom, 10,000 square feet
- No seat is more than 160 feet from center stage in the John A. Williams Theatre.
- There are 1,000 parking spaces on site.
- The Centre is located one mile from the new Braves stadium and only 15 minutes from downtown Atlanta.
- ArtsBridge programs began in 2007 and reach 30,000 – 40,000 to 50,000 students each year.

FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

Below are simple guidelines for ArtsBridge Field Trips to Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. Please read carefully and contact us at (770) 916-2805 if you have questions.

Reservations: All field trip admissions are to be made in advance. Please do not bring more than the number of seats reserved. Performances are expected to sell out and we will not be able to accommodate an increase in numbers at the last minute. All patrons, including teachers and chaperones, must have a reservation in order to attend these performances. Children under the age of three are not permitted to attend.

Payment: Payments must be made in full, 3 weeks prior to the day of show, or we will not be able to accommodate your reservation. An invoice will be given to you at the time your reservation is made. Once you have paid in full, we will send a confirmation, which will serve as your school's ticket into the performance. ArtsBridge reserves the right to cancel unpaid reservations after the payment due date.

Transportation: The Centre can accommodate school buses, vans and cars. Please be aware that vans and cars will incur a \$6 per vehicle parking fee. A third party contractor runs the Centre's garage and charges this fee. There is no charge for parking school buses. All buses, vans and cars must comply with directions provided by on-site staff.

Arrival: All vehicles should approach the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre from AKERS MILL ROAD (map enclosed). Upon entering the driveway, buses will be directed to the circular drive where they will temporarily pull up to the curb for unloading. A Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre representative will board the bus and check-in your school. Students will be immediately unloaded and buses will be directed to their designated parking areas.

Seating: Students are seated as they arrive, starting with the floor level, first row. The exception to this is for programs with older and younger students in attendance at the same time. In this case, students in kindergarten and first-grade will be seated in the first few rows of the theatre. There are three levels of seating, with the back row of the top level no more than 160 feet from the stage.

Restrooms: Please seat your entire group, before taking restroom breaks, so that you can be easily found. Students MUST be accompanied by adult chaperones when going to the restroom. We encourage that you take groups so there are fewer trips.

Chaperones: Chaperones have a job to perform while at the Centre. Please make sure that your chaperones are interspersed among students, and that they are prepared for the day's responsibilities. Please discuss restroom visits, emergencies, behavior, etc. with your chaperones prior to arrival.

Behavior: Students and teachers are encouraged to enjoy performances, applaud and express enthusiasm in a manner that is appropriate for the performance, yet not disruptive for others. We request that all phones, tablets and any other electronic devices be completely turned off or on silent mode during the performance. We ask that chaperones on upper levels watch for students tossing or throwing items to lower levels and prevent students from climbing or leaning on railings. No student can leave the audience chamber without an accompanying chaperone. Students/classes that are disruptive may be asked to leave the performance with no refund. (See *Theatre Etiquette on Page 8*)

Departure: Performances last approximately one hour. Upon conclusion of the performance, classes will be dismissed to the designated parking area to board their buses and return to school.

Lunch: There is no facility for students to eat lunch in the Cobb Energy Centre. We recommend students eat lunch at the Galleria Specialty Mall, Cumberland Mall, at a park on the route to/from the venue or on their bus. Check Page 7 for some of ArtsBridge's favorite restaurants to eat at around the theatre!



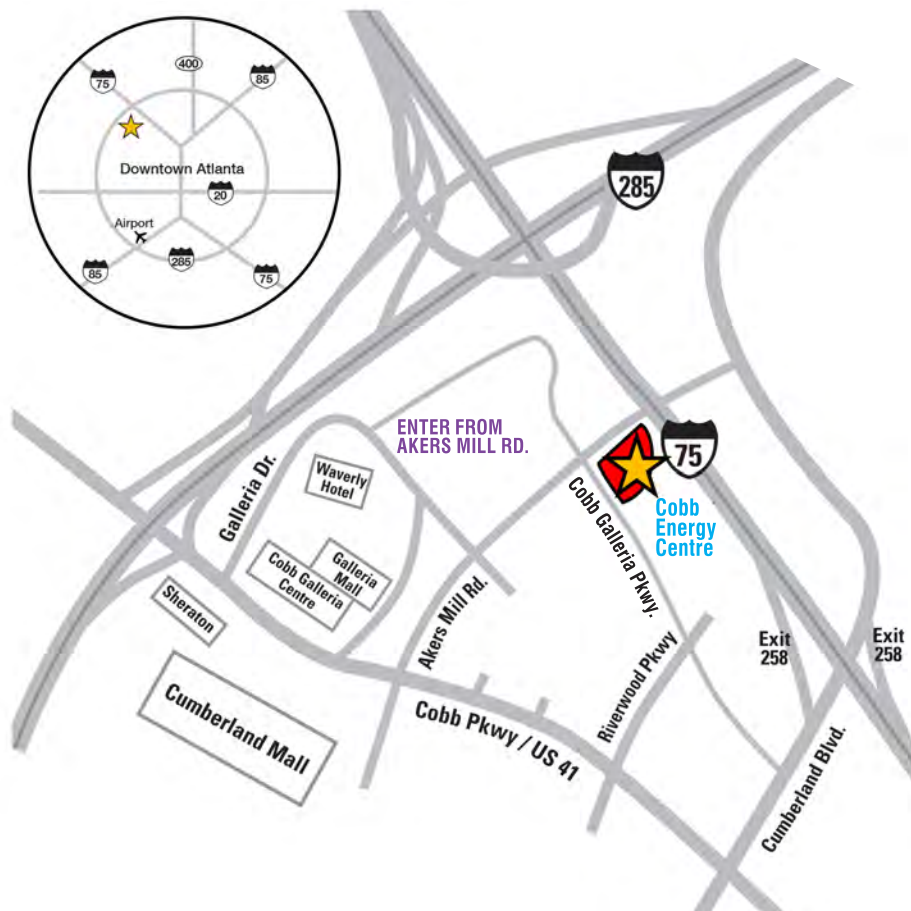
TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Buses: All school buses must approach the building from AKERS MILL ROAD on the North side of the building. This will be crucial in assuring a fairly smooth flow of traffic. There will be Centre representatives guiding you. Buses will pull onto the site from behind the building and then drive to the front. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR DRIVERS USE THE MAP BELOW. There is no charge to park school buses on-site.

Checking In: When you arrive at the front of the building, a representative from the Centre will board your bus to check-in your school. You and your bus driver will be given a large number that will be taped to the bus windows. Please remember your number, as it will help you find your bus after the performance.

After the Show: After the performance, buses will be parked in the Centre's surface lot in numerical order and representatives will assist you in locating your bus(es). We encourage everyone to board their buses as quickly and safely as possible. For safety reasons, we hold all buses until everyone has boarded, so please make your way directly to the surface parking lot following the performance (see map below).

Cars/Vans/SUVs: You will approach the building in the same manner, but will park in our parking deck. Please note there is a \$6 per vehicle parking fee for cars/vans/SUVs. After you have parked, make your way to level 2 of the deck and to the west side (theatre side) of the building. When you emerge from the parking deck, there will be a Centre representative to check you in and direct you to your seats.



ADDITIONAL MAP FOR ALL VEHICLES ATTENDING



2800 Cobb Galleria Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30339

LOCAL DINING

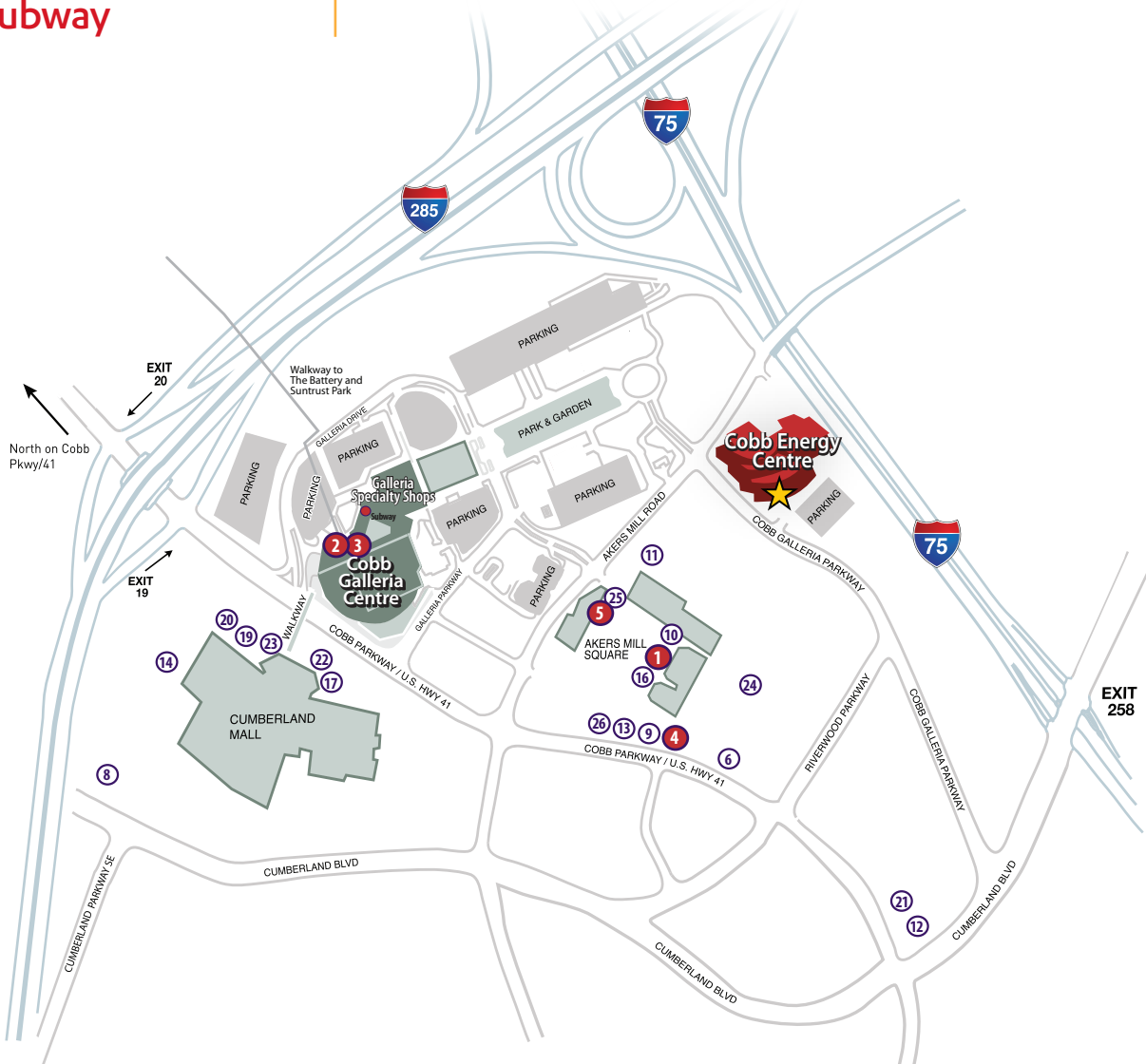
Food Sponsors

ArtsBridge Program Food Sponsors within driving distance of Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre:

1. Grub Burger
2. Big Chow Grill
3. Murph's
4. Chick-fil-A
5. Subway

Other Nearby Restaurants

6. Bonefish Grill
7. C&S Seafood and Oyster Bar
8. Carrabba's
9. Chipotle Mexican Grill
10. Chuy's Tex-Mex
11. Cinco's Mexican Cantina
12. Copeland's of New Orleans
13. Corner Bakery Cafe
14. Fresh To Order
15. Kuroshio Sushi Bar & Grill
16. Longhorn Steakhouse
17. Maggiano's Little Italy
18. Olive Garden
19. P.F. Chang's
20. Stoney River Legendary Steaks
21. Taco Mac
22. Ted's Montana Grill
23. The Cheesecake Factory
24. Top Spice
25. Blaze Pizza
26. Zoe's Kitchen



THEATRE ETIQUETTE

A live performance is a unique experience shared between performers and audience members. Unlike television or movies, audience distractions can disrupt the performers, production and audience. Before you arrive at the Cobb Energy Centre, please review the following information with your students and chaperones, and help ArtsBridge create a meaningful experience for all.

- Arrive early. Groups are seated on a first come, first served basis. Seats are not assigned for ArtsBridge events.
- Food, drink, candy, gum, etc. is not permitted in the theatre.
- Silence or turn off all electronic devices. We encourage you to share your ArtsBridge experience at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre via social media, but please refrain from doing so or texting during performances; the glow from your device is distracting.
- Photography and video/audio recording of any kind is not allowed in the theatre during the performance.
- Respect the theatre. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- Talk before and after the performance only. Remember, the theatre is designed to amplify sound, so the other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end.
- Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage – they will let you know what is appropriate.
- If you need assistance during the show, please find your nearest volunteer usher.
- As you enter and exit the theatre, remember to walk and stay with your group.
- Open your eyes, ears, mind and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!



Photos by Raifermen



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Before attending an ArtsBridge Field Trip, review the following questions and vocabulary with your students:

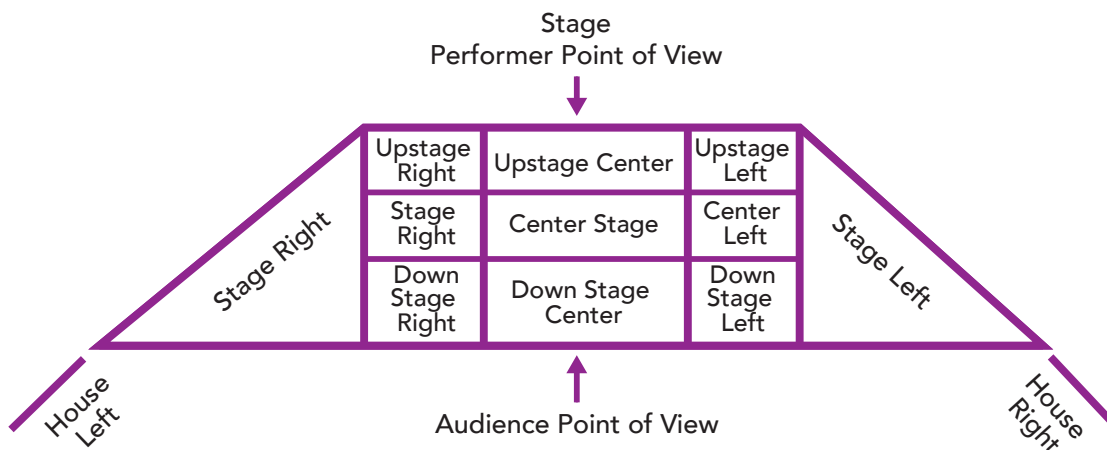
1. How many of you have experienced a live theatre performance? What did you see?
2. What are some of the differences between going to the theatre and watching television or going to a movie?
3. The BAD Audience Member! A fun way to review theatre etiquette with your students is to have them point out bad audience behavior during a show. Here's one way to illustrate this concept:



Photo by Rafermen

- a. Have students present something to the class. The key is they are “actors” and the class is the audience.
- b. Once they are into the activity, you (the teacher) leave the room and then re-enter. Enter loudly, chew gum, step on people’s feet, talk to them, etc. Be the worst audience member. Find a seat and continue to talk to others, ask what’s going on in the performance, take pictures, talk on your cell phone etc.
- c. Ask the class to list all the bad behavior. Write these on the board.
- d. Ask the audience members how they felt when the bad audience member came into the theatre. Could they hear the actors? Were they distracted?
- e. Ask the actors how they felt. Could they concentrate on their performance?

4. Review the stage diagram below with the students. Draw the diagram on the whiteboard and have students come up and write in each part of the stage.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Before you see *West Side Story*, consider discussing some of the **Themes and Key Questions** that this show addresses with your students.

West Side Story is a story about two street gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, in New York City in the 1950s. While the Jets and the Sharks are fictional gangs, this period of New York history was full of teen-gangs. Inspired by news articles about real youth gang violence happening in major cities across America, *West Side Story* was an incredibly timely piece. Gang members were rarely older than twenty; some were as young as eight. Like the Sharks and the Jets, they had creative, evocative names such as the Beavers, the Egyptian Kings, and the Jokers. A large influx of immigrants post-World War II brought people of different ethnic backgrounds into the city. They lived and worked together, and for social support, they formed gangs segregated by race. These youth gangs were also defined by territory, established boundaries cut from the city, usually separated by city blocks.

Having a group with which to associate, and a territory to call your own, was extremely important for these young gang members. Not only did it offer protection, purpose, and community, but it gave these young men a sense of self-identity.

The violence depicted in *West Side Story* is not an exaggeration. One of the biggest newspaper headlines of the time that centered on youth gangs chronicled the murder of two teenage boys by members of a Puerto Rican gang known as the Vampires. While this one story became newsworthy for its brutality (as well as the fact that the victims were not—as was suspected by the Vampires—rival gang members) violence was commonplace and murder was far from unheard of. They fought over territory and girls, fought because of racial and linguistic differences. Mostly, though, these boys fought to prove themselves, both to their fellow gang members and their rivals.

Military language, dress, and organization heavily influenced how these youth gangs were run, down to the ranking of individual members and the precision with which they protected their respective turf. That being said, most often their violent behavior showed a lack of discipline or motivating morality.

Dr. Lewis Yablonsky, a criminologist and sociologist who worked with gang members in the 1950s, says, “Some of these guys were quite deranged and most of them had some sort of emotional problem. They weren’t like the nice guys in *West Side Story*. Individuals had low self-esteem and joined gangs to gain some feeling of power and control, which is the same reason kids join gangs today.”

Terminology such as “rumbles” and “war councils” are real phrases used by youth gangs during this time. The unique lingo was representative of youth of both their age and standing as gang members, and allowed them to have their own secret language that adult figures—such as police officers—wouldn’t catch onto. Many words derive either from jazz/beat lingo or military terminology—appropriate considering the aesthetic and organizational influences at work in their culture.

Courtesy of Orlando Shakespeare Theater

For more information and articles to prepare your students for *West Side Story*, please see our additional resources at the end of the study guide.

IMMIGRATION, RACISM, AND THE AMERICAN DREAM:

In *West Side Story*, the Jets feel threatened by the Sharks. They think that all their problems are caused by the new immigrants. The Sharks are glad to be away from the poor island of Puerto Rico, and in America, where they aspire to be wealthy and achieve greatness. However, America has its challenges as well.

What is the American dream?

Does every American have equal access to the American dream?

GANGS AND POLICE BRUTALITY:

In the musical, Lieutenant Schrank and Officer Krupke confront the gangs on several occasions. Although they attempt to dispel the violence, they are often disrespectful to the gangs. The gangs are also disrespectful to the police, constantly poking fun at them.

What are the dangers of being part of a gang?

What should be the role of police in our society?

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE OPERA

Many people have preconceived ideas about the opera. Read the truth behind some of the most popular opera myths and see if they answer some of your questions about the opera as well.

MYTH #1: Opera is boring and stuffy.

Not true! Operas tell some of the most interesting, scandalous, and beautiful stories of all time. It's not unusual to find love triangles, murders, fatal illnesses, and messages from beyond the grave.

MYTH #2: Opera is sung in a foreign language so I won't understand the story.

We can help! It is true that many operas are sung in languages other than English. You may hear opera performed in Italian, French, German, or Spanish. Even though *West Side Story* is sung in English, we encourage you to read the synopsis of the opera before you arrive. Knowing the story will help you follow along.

MYTH #3: I need to wear a tuxedo or a ball gown to the opera.

Some people like to dress up when they go to an opera performance, but there is no dress code to attend an opera. You will see people wearing everything from jeans to ball gowns. Dressing up can be a part of the fun of attending an opera performance but you should wear whatever makes you comfortable. The opera is a place for everyone.



Photo by Raftermen



If you like what you have seen and heard, let the performers know! It is okay to applaud at the end of songs, called arias, and at the end of a scene. If you really liked what you heard, call out “bravo” (to the men on stage), “brava” (to the women) and “bravi” (for all on stage). And of course, a standing ovation is always welcome!

THEATRICAL VOCABULARY

Review the following theatrical terms with your students before attending the performance! This will help them better understand all of the elements of a production.

Author – the writer of a script; also called the book

Audition – to perform to get a role for the production; usually includes singing, dancing and reading scenes from the show; usually takes place in front of the Director & Creative Team

Ballad – a slow song for actors to showcase vocal clarity

Blocking – the specific movement of actors on stage; usually given by the Director

Box Office – a booth inside the theatre where tickets are sold

“Calling the Show” – the process of calling out the lighting, sound and scene-change cues during a performance; usually done by the stage manager

Casting – the process through which actors are chosen for roles in the production

Casting Agent – one who chooses actors for roles in the production

Choreographer – one who designs dance sequences and teaches them to the cast of the production

Composer – one who writes the music

Conductor – one who directs the orchestra

Costumes – a set of clothes in a style typically of a particular country or historical period

Curtain Call – the appearance of one or more performers on stage after a performance to acknowledge the audience’s applause

Director – one who supervises the creative aspects and guides the artistic vision of the production

Dress Rehearsal – rehearsal in which performers practice with costumes, props, lights and microphones

Dresser – one who assists performers with their costumes during dress rehearsals and shows

Electrician – one who works with the lighting designer to adjust and operate lighting instruments

Ensemble / Chorus – typically singers, dancers or actors who perform in group numbers

Head Carpenter – one who builds the sets for the production

House Left – the left side of the theatre, when facing the stage (audience’s point of view)

House Manager – one who oversees all aspects of the audiences; responsible for ushers and audience safety

House Right – the right side of the theatre, when facing the stage (audiences point of view)

Lighting Designer – one who decides where the lighting instruments should go, how they should be colored and which ones should be on at any particular time to affect mood, visibility and to showcase costumes and sets

Lyricist – one who writes the words to a song

Makeup Artist – one who applies cosmetics to a performer’s face and body

Music Director – one who teaches and rehearses the music with the orchestra

Orchestra Pit – the lowered area in front of a stage where the orchestra (musicians) sit and play during the performance

Overture – an orchestral piece at the beginning of an opera, suite, play, oratorio, or other extended composition

Producer – a person responsible for the financial and managerial aspects of staging a play, opera, musical, ballet, etc.

Program – a listing of the order of events, names of the cast and crew and other relevant information for the production

Property (Props) Manager – one who manages all items used on stage that cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe

Proscenium arch – the arch opening between the stage and auditorium; the frame of the stage

Read-through – the cast reads through the script without movement or music; typically done at the first rehearsal

Set Designer – one who designs the scenery for the stage

Sitzprobe – the first rehearsal with both the performers and the orchestra, with no staging or dancing

Sound Designer – one who plans and executes the layout of all sound playbook and equipment for the show

Sound Operator – one who handles the sound playbook and mixing equipment for the show; works with Sound Designer

Sound Board – a desk comprising a number of input channels where each sound source is provided with its own control channel through which sound signals are routed into two or more outputs; controls all microphones and music

Spotlights – a lamp projecting a narrow, intense beam of light directly onto a place or person, especially a performer on stage

Standby / Understudy – one who studies a role and is prepared to substitute a performer when needed

Stage Left – the left side of the stage, when facing the audience (performer’s point of view)

Stage Manager – one who is responsible for the quality of the show’s production, assists the director and oversees the show at each performance

Stage Right – the right side of the stage, when facing the audiences (performer’s point of view)

Technical Rehearsal – rehearsal incorporating the technical elements of a show such as the scene and property shifts, lighting, sound and special effects

Uptempo Song – a fast, upbeat song for actors to showcase dancing and acting ability

Usher – one who guides audience members to their seats

Wig Master / Mistress – one who obtains and customizes wigs for performers to wear

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

WEST SIDE STORY

Based on a conception of **Jerome Robbins**

Book: **Arthur Laurents**

Music: **Leonard Bernstein**

Lyrics: **Stephen Sondheim**

Original production directed and choreographed by **Jerome Robbins**

Premiere Date: **September 26, 1957**

SYNOPSIS

PROLOGUE:

The opening is a carefully choreographed, half-danced/half-mimed ballet of sorts. It shows the growing tensions between the Sharks, a Puerto Rican gang, and the Jets, a gang made up of “American” boys. An incident between the Jets and Shark leader, Bernardo, escalates into an all out fight between the two gangs. Officers Schrank and Krupke arrive to break up the fight.

ACT ONE:

Detective Schrank, the senior cop on the beat, tries to get the Jets to tell him which Puerto Ricans are starting trouble in the neighborhood, as he claims he is on their side. The Jets, however, are not stool pigeons and won't tell him

anything. Frustrated, Schrank threatens to beat the crap out of the Jets unless they make nice. When the police leave, the Jets bemoan the Sharks coming onto their turf. They decide that they need to have one big rumble to settle the matter once and for all – even if winning requires fighting with knives and guns. Riff plans to have a war council with Bernardo to decide on weapons. Action wants to be his second, but Riff says that Tony is always his second. The other boys complain that Tony hasn't been around for a month, but Riff doesn't care; once you're a Jet, you're a Jet for life (“Jet Song”).

Riff goes to see Tony, who is now working at Doc's drugstore. Riff presses him to come to the school dance for the war council, but Tony resists; he's lost the thrill of being a Jet. He explains that, every night for a month, he's had a strange feeling that something important is just around the corner. Nevertheless, Riff convinces Tony to come to the dance. Riff leaves Tony to wonder about this strange feeling that he's been having (“Something's Coming”).

In a bridal shop, Anita remakes Maria's communion dress into a party dress. They are both Puerto Rican. Anita is knowing, sexual and sharp. Maria is excited, enthusiastic and childlike, but also growing into an adult. Maria complains that the dress is too young-looking, but Anita explains that Bernardo, her boyfriend and Maria's brother, made her promise not to make the dress too short. It turns out that the dress is for the dance, which Maria is attending with Chino, whom she is expected to marry, despite the fact that she does not have any feelings for him.

West Side Story Who's who?

THE JETS

Riff, the leader

Tony, his best friend

Action, second-in-command

A-Rab, Baby John, Big Deal,

Diesel, Snowboy, Gee-Tar and

Anybodys

THE JET GIRLS

Graziella, Riff's girl

Velma, Graziella's best friend

Minnie, Clarice and **Pauline**

THE SHARKS

Bernardo, the leader and
Maria's brother

Chino, his best friend

Pepe, second-in-command

Indio, Luis, Anxious, Nibbles
and **Juano**

THE SHARK GIRLS

Maria, Bernardo's sister

Anita, Bernardo's girlfriend

Rosalia, Consuelo, Teresita,
Francisca, Estella and
Marguerita

THE ADULTS

Doc, owner of the local
drugstore/soda shop

Schrank, local police lieutenant

Krupke, neighborhood cop and
Schrank's right hand man

Glad Hand, well meaning social
worker in charge of the dance



Photo by Lynn Lane

WEST SIDE STORY

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

At the dance in the local gym, the group is divided: Jets and their girls on one side and Sharks and their girls on the other. Riff and his lieutenants move to challenge Bernardo and his lieutenants, but they are interrupted by Glad Hand, the chaperone who is overseeing the dance, and Officer Krupke. The two initiate some dances to get the kids to dance together, across the gang lines. In the promenade leading up to the dance, though, the girls and boys end up facing each other at random, Jet girls across from Shark boys and vice versa. Bernardo reaches across the Jet girl in front of him to take Anita's hand, and Riff does the same with his girlfriend, Velma. Everyone dances with their own group as Tony enters ("Mambo"). During the dance, Maria and Tony spot each other. There is an instant connection. Bernardo interrupts them, telling Tony to stay away from his sister and asking Chino to take her home. Riff and Bernardo agree to meet at Doc's in half an hour for the war council. As everyone else disappears, Tony is overcome with the feeling of having met the most beautiful girl ever ("Maria").

Later, Tony finds the fire escape outside of Maria's apartment and calls up to her. She appears in the window, but is nervous that they will get caught. Her parents call her inside, but she stays. She and Tony profess their love to each other ("Tonight"). He agrees to meet her at the bridal shop the next day. Bernardo calls Maria inside. Anita admonishes him, saying that Maria already has a mother and father to take care of her. Bernardo insists that they, like Maria, don't understand this country. Bernardo, Anita, Chino and their friends discuss the unfairness of America – they are treated like foreigners, while "Polacks" like Tony are treated like real Americans, paid twice as much for their jobs. Anita tries to lure Bernardo inside and away from the war council, but he refuses. As the boys leave for the council, one of Anita's friends, Rosalia, claims to be homesick for Puerto Rico. Anita scoffs at this. While Rosalia expounds on the beauties of the country, Anita responds with why she prefers her new home ("America").

At the drugstore, the Jets wait for the Sharks discussing what weapons they might have to use. Doc is upset that the boys are planning to fight at all. Anybodys, a tomboy who is trying to join the Jets, asks Riff if she can participate in the rumble, but he says no. Doc doesn't understand why the boys are making trouble for the Puerto Ricans, and the boys respond that the Sharks make trouble for them. Doc calls them hoodlums and Action and A-rab get very upset. Riff tells them that they have to save their steam for the rumble and keep cool, rather than freaking out ("Cool").

Bernardo arrives at the drugstore and he and Riff begin laying out the terms of the rumble. Tony arrives and convinces them all to agree to a fair fight – just skin, no weapons. The Sharks' best man fights the Jets' best man; Bernardo agrees, thinking that means he will get to fight Tony, but the Jets say they get to pick their fighter. Schrank arrives and breaks up the council. He tells the Puerto Ricans to get out. Bernardo and his gang exit. Schrank tries to get the Jets to reveal the location of the rumble and becomes increasingly frustrated when they refuse. He insults them and leaves. As Tony and Doc close up the shop, Tony reveals that he's in love with a Puerto Rican. Doc is worried.

The next day at the bridal shop, Maria tells Anita that she can leave, that Maria will clean up. Anita is about to go when Tony arrives. She suddenly understands and promises not to tell on them. When she leaves, Tony tells Maria that the rumble will be a fair fight, but even that's not acceptable for her, so she asks him to go to the rumble and stop it. He agrees. He'll do anything for her. They fantasize about being together and getting married ("One Hand, One Heart"). Later, the members of the ensemble wait expectantly for the fight, all for different reasons ("Tonight Quintet").

At the rumble, Diesel and Bernardo prepare to fight, with Chino and Riff as their seconds. Tony enters and tries to break up the fight, but provokes Bernardo against him instead. Bernardo calls Tony a chicken for not fighting him. Riff punches Bernardo and the fight escalates quickly until Riff and Bernardo pull out knives. Bernardo kills Riff and, in response, Tony kills Bernardo, instantly horrified by what he's done. The police arrive as everyone scatters; Anybodys pulls Tony away just in time.

West Side Story debuted on Broadway in September 1957. The show immediately gained fame for its bold, artistic vision and unflinching engagement with social concerns of the day.



Photo by Lynn Lane

WEST SIDE STORY

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

ACT TWO:

In Maria's apartment, she gushes to her friends about how it is her wedding night and she is so excited ("I Feel Pretty"). Chino interrupts her reverie to tell her that Tony has killed Bernardo. She refuses to believe him, but when Tony arrives on her fire escape, he confesses. He offers to turn himself in, but she begs him to stay with her. She says that, although they are together, everyone is against them. Tony says they'll find a place where they can be together ("Somewhere").

In a back alley, the Jets regroup in shock. No one has seen Tony. Officer Krupke comes by, threatening to take them to the station house. The boys chase him away for the moment and then release some tension by play-acting the scenario of what would happen if Krupke actually did take them to the station house ("Gee, Officer Krupke"). Anybodys shows up with information about Tony and the fact that Chino is looking for him. She uses this information to get the boys to treat her like one of the gang. The Jets agree that they need to find Tony and warn him about Chino.

Meanwhile, Anita comes into Maria's room and finds her with Tony. Tony and Maria are planning to run away. Tony knows that Doc will give him money, so he goes to the drugstore and tells Maria to meet him there. She agrees. When he leaves, Anita explodes at her for loving the boy who killed her brother. Maria acknowledges that it's not smart, but she can't help it ("A Boy Like That / I Have a Love"). Anita tells Maria that Chino has a gun and is looking for Tony. Schrank arrives and detains Maria for questioning. Maria covertly asks Anita to go to Doc's and tell Tony that she has been delayed. Reluctantly, Anita agrees.

The Jets arrive at Doc's, learning that Tony and Doc are in the basement. Anita arrives and asks to speak to Doc. The Jets, recognizing her as Bernardo's girl and thinking that she is there to betray Tony to Chino, won't let her go down to the basement to talk to Doc. Instead, they harass and attack her. Doc arrives to find them ganging up on her; he breaks it up, but Anita, disgusted and hurt, lies to Doc and tells him to relay a message to Tony: Chino has shot Maria, and he will never see her again.



Photo by Lynn Lane

When Doc returns to Tony in the basement, he delivers Anita's message. Tony is distraught and heartbroken. He runs out into the streets and calls Chino to come for him. Anybodys tries to stop him, but Tony doesn't care. He yells to Chino that he should come out and shoot him, too. Maria appears in the street – much to Tony's surprise – and they run towards each other. In that moment, Chino steps out of the shadows and shoots Tony, who falls into Maria's arms, gravely wounded.

The Jets, Sharks and Doc appear on the street. Maria picks up the gun and points it all of them, asking Chino if there are enough bullets to kill all of them and herself, as well. The depths of her sadness and anger move everyone as she breaks down over Tony's body. Officers Krupke and Schrank arrive. They stand with Doc, watching as two boys from each gang pick up Tony's body and form a processional. The rest follow the processional, with Baby John picking up Maria's shawl, giving it to her and helping her up. As Maria follows the others, the adults continue to bear silent witness ("Finale").

Courtesy of Music Theatre International



Photo by Lynn Lane

ABOUT THE COMPOSER LEONARD BERNSTEIN

(1918–1990)

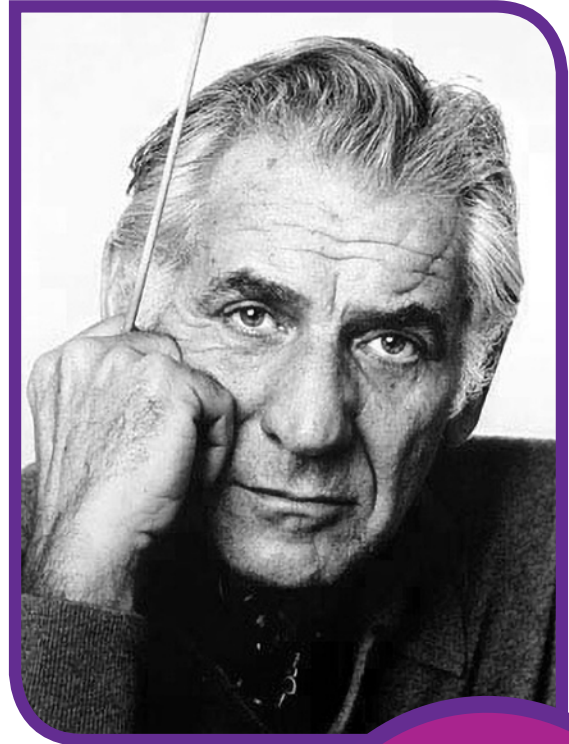
Leonard Bernstein, (born August 25, 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts, U.S.—died October 14, 1990, New York, New York), American conductor, composer, and pianist noted for his accomplishments in both classical and popular music, for his flamboyant conducting style, and for his pedagogic flair, especially in concerts for young people.

Bernstein played piano from age 10. He attended Boston Latin School; Harvard University (A.B., 1939), where he took courses in music theory with Arthur Tillman Merritt and counterpoint with Walter Piston; the Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia (1939–41), where he studied conducting with Fritz Reiner and orchestration with Randall Thompson; and the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood, Massachusetts, where he studied conducting with Serge Koussevitzky. In 1943 Bernstein was appointed assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic; the first signal of his forthcoming success came on November 14, 1943, when he was summoned unexpectedly to substitute for the conductor Bruno Walter. His technical self-assurance under difficult circumstances and his interpretive excellence made an immediate impression and marked the beginning of a brilliant career. He subsequently conducted the New York City Center orchestra (1945–47) and appeared as guest conductor in the United States, Europe, and Israel. In 1953 he became the first American to conduct at La Scala in Milan. From 1958 to 1969 Bernstein was conductor and musical director of the New York Philharmonic, becoming the first American-born holder of those posts. With this orchestra he made several international tours in Latin America, Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan. His popularity increased through his appearances not only as conductor and pianist but also as a commentator and entertainer. Bernstein explained classical music to young listeners on such television shows as *Omnibus* and *Young People's Concerts*. After 1969 he continued to write music and to perform as a guest conductor with several symphonies throughout the world.

As a composer Bernstein made skillful use of diverse elements ranging from biblical themes, as in the *Symphony No. 1* (1942; also called *Jeremiah*) and the *Chichester Psalms* (1965); to jazz rhythms, as in the *Symphony No. 2* (1949; *The Age of Anxiety*), after a poem by W.H. Auden; to Jewish liturgical themes, as in the *Symphony No. 3* (1963; *Kaddish*). His best-known works are the musicals *On the Town* (1944; filmed 1949), *Wonderful Town* (1953; filmed 1958), *Candide* (1956), and the very popular *West Side Story* (1957; filmed 1961), written in collaboration with Stephen Sondheim and Jerome Robbins. He also wrote the scores for the ballets *Fancy Free* (1944), *Facsimile* (1946), and *Dybbuk* (1974), and he composed the music for the film *On the Waterfront* (1954), for which he received an Academy Award nomination. His *Mass*, written especially for the occasion, was performed at the opening of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., in September 1971. In 1989 he conducted two historic performances of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor* (1824; Choral), which were held in East and West Berlin to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall. In 1990 Bernstein was awarded the Japan Art Association's *Praemium Imperiale* prize for music.

Bernstein published a collection of lectures, *The Joy of Music* (1959); *Young People's Concerts, for Reading and Listening* (1962, revised edition 1970); *The Infinite Variety of Music* (1966); and *The Unanswered Question* (1976), taken from his Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard University (1973).

By Encyclopædia Britannica



Bernstein was conductor and musical director of the New York Philharmonic from 1958 to 1969. He was the first American-born holder of those posts.

Photo by: Jack Mitchell [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

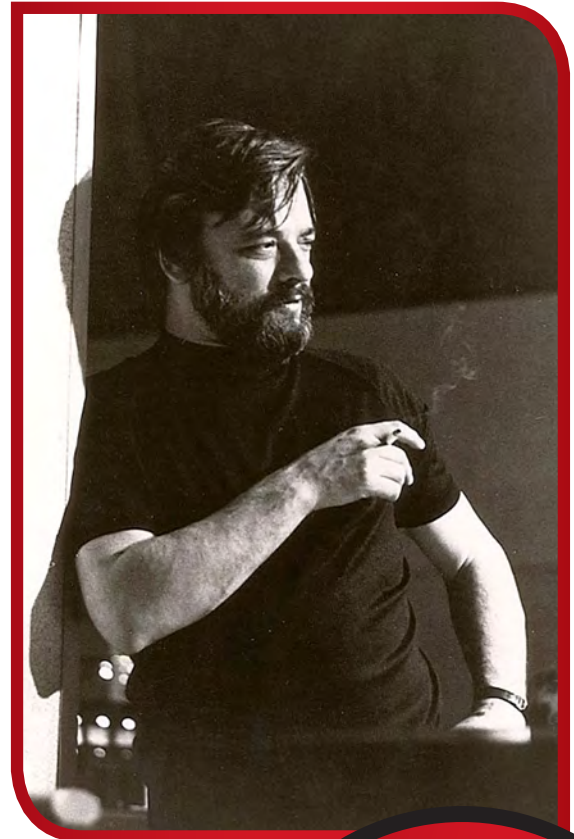
ABOUT THE LIBRETTIST

STEPHEN SONDHEIM

(1930-)

American composer Stephen Sondheim was born on March 22, 1930, in New York City. After early practice at songwriting, his knowledge of musical theater was influenced by master lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II, who served as a mentor.

Sondheim's contributions to *West Side Story* and *Gypsy* in the 1950s brought him recognition as a rising star of Broadway. Known for the startling complexity of his lyricism and music, his major works for the theater also include *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Sunday in the Park With George* and *Into the Woods*.



Sondheim studied piano and organ, and at age 15 he wrote a musical at George School in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

His parents, Herbert and Janet (née Fox) Sondheim, worked in New York's garment industry; his father was a dress manufacturer and his mother was a designer. They divorced in 1942 and Sondheim moved to Doylestown, Pennsylvania with his mother. He began studying piano and organ at a young age, and he was already practicing songwriting as a student at the George School.

In Pennsylvania, Sondheim became friends with the son of Broadway lyricist and producer Oscar Hammerstein II, who gave the young Sondheim advice and tutelage in musical theater, and served as a surrogate father during a time of tumult. In his teens, Sondheim had penned a satire about his school, the musical *By George!*, which he thought his mentor would love and thus asked for feedback. Hammerstein in fact thought the project needed tons of work and offered honest criticism, which Sondheim would later see as invaluable. Sondheim also worked as an assistant on 1947's *Allegro*, one of Hammerstein's theater collaborations with composer Richard Rodgers, with the experience having long-lasting implications on the young composer's approach to his work.

Sondheim attended Williams College, where he majored in music. After graduating from the school in 1950, he studied further with avant-garde composer Milton Babbitt and moved to New York City.

In 2008, Sondheim was honored with a special Tony Award for lifetime achievement in the theatre.

By A&E Television Networks

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHER JEROME ROBBINS

(1918-1998)

Jerome Robbins, original surname Rabinowitz, (born Oct. 11, 1918, New York, N.Y., U.S.– died July 29, 1998, New York City), one of the most popular and imaginative American choreographers of the 20th century. Robbins was first known for his skillful use of contemporary American themes in ballets and Broadway and Hollywood musicals. He won acclaim for highly innovative ballets structured within the traditional framework of classical dance movements.

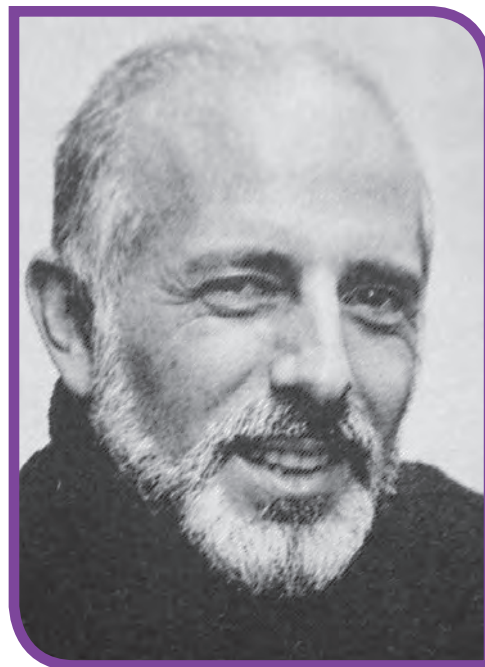
The son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, Rabinowitz studied chemistry for one year at New York University before embarking on a career as a dancer in 1936. He studied a wide array of dance traditions, appeared with the Gluck Sandor–Felicia Sorel Dance Center, and danced in the chorus of several Broadway musicals. In 1940 he joined Ballet Theater (now American Ballet Theatre), where he soon began dancing such important roles as Petrouchka.

For the next phase of his career Robbins was to divide his time between musicals and ballet. He created such ballets as *Interplay* (1945) and *Facsimile* (1946). In 1948 Robbins joined the newly founded New York City Ballet (NYCB) as both dancer and choreographer, and the following year

he became its associate artistic director under George Balanchine. Robbins created many important ballets for NYCB, some of the earliest being *The Cage* (1951), *Afternoon of a Faun* (1953), and *The Concert* (1956). These innovative works display his gift for capturing the essence of a particular era through his mastery of vernacular dance styles and his understanding of gesture.

His Broadway career is well represented by *West Side Story* (1957), a musical that transplants the tragic story of Romeo and Juliet to the gritty milieu of rival street gangs in New York City. Robbins conceived, directed, and choreographed this work, which featured a musical score by Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and set designs by Robbins' longtime collaborator Oliver Smith. Robbins received the 1958 Tony Award for best choreography for the Broadway version and Academy Awards for his choreography and codirection (with Robert Wise) of the highly successful 1961 film version. (The original musical was successfully revived on Broadway in 1980.) He directed and choreographed the popular musical *Gypsy* in 1959 and the even more successful *Fiddler on the Roof* in 1964.

In 1958 Robbins formed a charitable organization bearing his name, the Jerome Robbins Foundation. Originally intended to fund dance and theatre projects, the foundation also provided financial support to projects combating the effects of the AIDS crisis. In accordance with Robbins' earlier wishes, in 2003 the foundation awarded the first Jerome Robbins Prizes in recognition of excellence in dance.



Jerome Robbins received the 1958 **Tony Award** for best choreography for the Broadway version of *West Side Story* and **Academy Awards** for choreography and codirection of the 1961 movie.

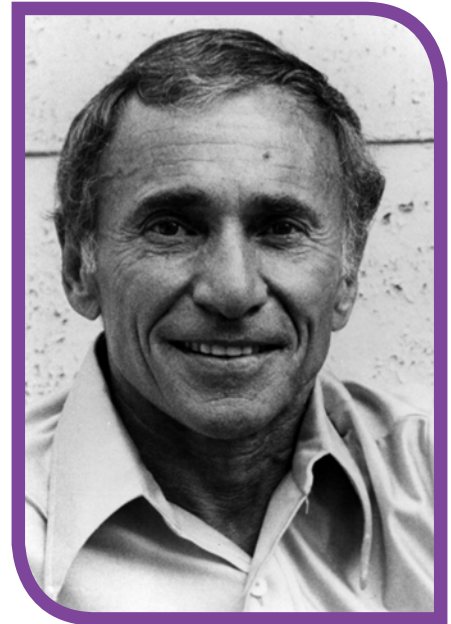
By Encyclopædia Britannica

ABOUT THE WRITER

ARTHUR LAURENTS

(1917-2011)

Arthur Laurents, (Arthur Levine), American playwright, director, and screenwriter (born July 14, 1917, Brooklyn, N.Y.—died May 5, 2011, New York, N.Y.), wrote the books for several successful Broadway productions, most notably the hit musicals *West Side Story* (1957; filmed 1961) and *Gypsy* (1959; filmed 1962), during a career that spanned some 60 years. After graduating (1937) from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., with an English degree, Laurents wrote scripts for such radio programs as *The Thin Man*. He was drafted (1941) into the U.S. Army and wrote for military training films and radio programs, an experience that inspired his first Broadway play, *Home of the Brave* (1945; filmed 1949). Other notable Broadway plays and musicals that he wrote and/or directed include *Time of the Cuckoo* (1952), which he later adapted into the musical *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1965); *I Can Get It for You Wholesale* (1962), which helped launch the career of actress-singer Barbra Streisand; *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964); the Tony Award-winning musical *Hallelujah, Baby!* (1967); and *La Cage aux folles* (1983), for which Laurents won (1984) a Tony for best director. Laurents's noteworthy screenplays include *Rope* (1948), *Anastasia* (1956), *Bonjour tristesse* (1958), *The Way We Were* (1973), and *The Turning Point* (1977). In 2008 Laurents received his sixth Tony nomination, for directing a revival of *Gypsy*.



By Barbara A. Schreiber

West Side Story
was inspired by
William Shakespeare's play
Romeo and Juliet.



Photo by Lynn Lane

ROMEO AND JULIET

In *West Side Story*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is transported to 1950s New York City, as two young idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching and relevant musical dramas of our time.



Parallels between *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story*

- *Romeo and Juliet* begins with a street fight between the Montagues and Capulets; the Jets and the Sharks have a similar fight.
- The beginning fight is broken up by Krupke and Schrank, just as Prince Escalus breaks up the Montague-Capulet fight.
- Tony has a reoccurring dream, similar to the one Romeo tells Mercutio about.
- Juliet is betrothed to Paris, and Maria has been set up with Chino.
- Some Montague men crash the Capulet party in which Romeo meets Juliet. In *West Side Story*, Maria and Tony see each other from opposite sides of the gym and are immediately attracted to each other.
- Romeo searches for Juliet and finds her at her balcony. After the dance, Tony finds Maria and climbs the fire escape.
- Romeo and Juliet go to a Friar to get married; Maria and Tony role-play a wedding in the bridal shop.
- In the big fight scene, Bernardo kills Riff like Tybalt kills Mercutio; Tony avenges Riff's death by killing Bernardo, just as Romeo kills Tybalt.
- The Capulet nurse is disgraced by Montague men, while Anita is taunted and harassed by the Jets.
- Both stories feature Maria/Juliet's false death and Tony/Romeo's response to their mistaken belief that his their love is dead.

Compare and Contrast the following Characters and Scenes from *West Side Story* and *Romeo and Juliet*

ROMEO AND JULIET	WEST SIDE STORY	NOTES
Romeo	Tony	
Juliet	Maria	
Tybalt	Bernado	
Nurse	Anita	
Mercutio	Riff	
Prince Escalus	Lt. Schrank	
Officer & Citizens	Officer Krupke	
Act 1 fight in the streets of Verona	Opening sequence of gang fight on the streets of the Upper West Side NYC	
Capulet Ball	Dance at the Gym	
Juliet's Balcony	Maria's Fire Escape	
Death of Mercutio and Tybalt	Death of Riff and Bernardo	
Montague men disgracing the Nurse	Jets taunting and attacking Anita	
Romeo's Death	Tony's Death	
Juliet's final scene	Maria's final scene	
End of Romeo and Juliet	End of <i>West Side Story</i>	

OPERA 101

Opera is a dramatic story told through song.

Considered by many to be the most complete art form, it combines all of the elements of art, words, music, drama and dance. The earliest Italian operas were called by several names, such as “favola in musica” (fable in music) and “drama per musica” (drama by means of music). This last title is very close to the dictionary definition, and is the correct basis for any discussion about opera. The unique thing about opera is the use of music to convey an entire story/plot. This is based on the feeling that music can communicate people’s reactions and emotions better than words (read or spoken) or pictures. Opera takes any type of dramatic story and makes it more exciting and more believable with the help of music. Many famous stories have been made into operas, including *Cinderella*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.



Photo by Tim Wilkerson

A BRIEF HISTORY

The concept of opera was developing many years before the first opera was written. Its beginning can be traced to the ancient Greeks. They fused poetry and music, creating plays that incorporate song, spoken language and dance, accompanied by string or wind instruments. In the 1100s the early Christian church set religious stories to music, a style known as liturgical drama. The first true opera, *Daphne* (1597), was composed by Jacopo Peri. It told the story of a Greek myth. The first great composer of opera was Claudio Monteverdi. Some of his operas are still performed today. German composer Christoph Gluck’s most famous opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), marked a shift in importance from the performers to the drama. It also reduced the amount of recitative and laid the foundations for the progression of the art form. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was another prolific composer during this time and many of his operas like *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro* - 1786) and *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute* - 1791) are still frequently performed around the world.

OPERA 101



OPERA AROUND THE WORLD

Italy was the first country where opera became popular. It was the homeland of Jacopo Peri and Claudio Monteverdi. In time this exciting form of entertainment spread to the rest of Europe. France and Germany joined Italy as the principal opera producers. Eventually opera came to reflect the stories and musical styles of each of these countries. The Italians have always been famous for their love of singing, and so in Italian opera there has always been great emphasis placed on the singer and the beautiful sounds of the human voice. It wasn't until the late 19th century and early 20th century with the later works of Verdi and the operas of Puccini that a balance was achieved between the role of the orchestra and that of the singer. These two forces were combined to give a more effective presentation of the story. The French have favored the pictorial side of drama, and this has led to a continuing emphasis on the visual spectacle, especially with dancing. For example, the Paris opera audience in the 19th century would not accept a work for performance if it did not contain a major ballet. Verdi, an Italian composer, had to add ballets to all of his works to get them performed in Paris. The Germans have always sought to extract from both the Italian and French traditions, and go beyond both in an attempt to present more than just a story. In fact, one of the greatest German opera composers, Richard Wagner, chose legends or myths for most of his opera plots so that he could communicate ideas as well as just a story.

DIFFERENT OPERA STYLES

Opera Seria – serious opera. These stories are often tragic, and typically involve heroes and kings or ancient myths and gods. *Julius Caesar* (1724) by George Frederic Handel is a classic example of opera seria.

Opera Buffa – comic opera, always sung in Italian. The jokesters in these operas are always the working class, such as maids, peasants, or servants, who keep busy getting the best of their employers. *The Italian Girl in Algiers* (1813) by Rossini is an amusing example of opera buffa.

Singspiel, or “Sing Play,” evolved in German speaking countries out of the comic opera tradition. It includes elements of comic opera, spoken dialogue interjected among the sung phrases, and often, an exotic or fanciful theme. Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (1791) is an example of this style.

Bel Canto – This Italian phrase means “beautiful singing”. These operas grew from a style of singing emphasizing long phrases, breath control and flexibility in singing both loudly and softly. *The Barber of Seville* (1816) by Gioachino Rossini is a popular example of bel canto.

Grand Opera – spectacular opera. It is performed with elaborate sets and costumes. Many people are needed to make it happen. Grand opera involves royalty, heroism, an elaborate ballet scene, and can often last for several hours. Charles Gounod's *Faust* (1869 version) is an example of grand opera.

Music Drama – is a style of opera that is created by a single artist who writes both the text and the music to advance the drama. This style fuses many art forms, and makes each one as important as the others. *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyries*) (1870) and other operas by Richard Wagner defined this style.



Photo by Jeff Roffman

OPERA IN ATLANTA

HISTORY OF OPERA IN ATLANTA

Opera has been an integral part of Atlanta's cultural fabric since October 1866 when the Ghioni and Sussini Grand Italian Opera Company presented three operas in the city. The performances were well received and soon after, small touring companies began to bring more full-length operas to Atlanta.

Atlantans became avid fans of opera and in 1910 The Metropolitan Opera of New York toured Atlanta for the first time. Once a year, for a full week during spring, people flocked to the city to see the Met's wonderful performances and enjoy the many parties that were hosted throughout the city.

The opera was the place to be seen, with people crowding the lobbies and balconies of the various performance venues. The Met tour returned to Atlanta every spring until 1986, with the exception of 1931-1939 due to financial complications of the Great Depression.



Leontyne Price was one of the first African American featured singers with The Metropolitan Opera Company. This photo appeared in the program for the 1964 tour of *Don Giovanni*, in which she sang the role of Donna Anna. (photo: The Metropolitan Opera Company, *Carmen*, 1964 touring season program book / The Atlanta Opera archives)



The Metropolitan Opera Company's 1968 production of *Tosca* with Gabriella Tucci as Tosca, singing "Vissi d'arte." (photo: The Metropolitan Opera Company, *Tosca*, 1968 touring season program book / The Atlanta Opera archives)

With the success and popularity of the Met's annual tour came a desire for Atlanta to have its own opera company. Soon, several smaller, local opera companies began to operate in the area. In 1980, The Atlanta Civic Opera Association was created through the merging of two smaller companies, The Atlanta Lyric Opera and the Georgia Opera. In 1987 the company changed its name to The Atlanta Opera, Inc. Since its early beginnings, the company has grown and changed tremendously.

The Atlanta Opera was the first resident company in the new Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre in the fall of 2007. The Atlanta Opera season runs similarly to an academic calendar, opening in the fall and closing in the spring. It presents mainstage productions at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, with a minimum of four performances each. The Discoveries series offers two additional productions at smaller venues, often of special productions or contemporary works best staged in smaller, more intimate settings.

IMPORTANT JOBS

WHO KEEPS THE OPERA RUNNING?

In addition to the singers and musicians you see on stage and in the orchestra pit, there are many other folks who help bring the show to life!

MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR is responsible for the musical excellence of an opera. They ensure the singers understand the music, sing in the appropriate style, and work with the orchestra to make sure everyone is playing correctly together.

STAGE DIRECTOR is responsible for the action on the stage. They work with the designers to create the concept for the production. He or she helps the singers understand why their characters would act in certain ways, and how the characters communicate with each other.

CHOREOGRAPHER creates movement or dancing for operas. They study dance, movement and do research on different historical periods.

PRODUCTION MANAGER helps make the director's and designers' vision a reality by working with the shops that build the scenery and costumes.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR makes sure that the lighting, scenery, costumes and props are coordinated and that the crews who handle those elements know what needs to be done during the performance.

STAGE MANAGER manages the rehearsal schedule and takes detailed notes about the stage directions, lighting cues and scenery changes. During the performance, they are backstage calling all the technical cues and making sure the show runs smoothly.

SET DESIGNER creates the concept for the physical environment of the opera and works with the director to create the scenery that helps tell the story. They research history, color, space, architecture, and furniture.

LIGHTING DESIGNER helps create the mood of each scene with light, shadow, and color. They also study the music and work with the set designer and the director to decide how light will be used to help tell the story.

COSTUME DESIGNER creates the look of the characters with clothing. They choose the fabrics and supervise the construction of the costumes, or selection of pre-made costumes.



Photo by Jeff Roffman

The Stage Manager calls cues by watching monitors of a performance of *Turandot* in 2017.

WIG & MAKE-UP DESIGNER creates the hair and make-up styling for the show in tandem with the costumes and the production design. They are also responsible for any special effects make-up like scars, wounds or blood.

WARDROBE MANAGER makes sure all the costumes are clean and pressed and coordinates all the costume changes. Dressers help the singers put on their complicated costumes and change their costumes during the performance.

PROPERTIES (PROPS) MASTER is responsible for all the objects that the singers touch or move that are not part of their costumes. They do a lot of research to find the perfect period newspaper, set of glasses, bouquet of flowers, or book. They make artificial things look real on stage, like food or drink.

CREW & STAGEHANDS includes carpenters and electricians. They assist with the installation of the set on stage once it has been built. During the performance they are responsible for set and lighting changes

GLOSSARY

BASIC OPERA TERMS & VOCABULARY

ACT / SCENE

Acts and scenes are ways of categorizing sections of operas. An act is a large-scale division of an opera, and each opera will typically include from two to five acts. Acts can be subdivided into scenes, which are often differentiated by a change in setting or characters.

ADAGIO

Literally “at ease,” adagio is a tempo marking that indicates a slow speed. An adagio tempo marking indicates that the performer should play in a slow and leisurely style.

ALLEGRO

Italian for “cheerful” or “joyful,” Allegro is the most common tempo marking in Western music, indicating a moderately fast to quick speed.

ARIA

A song for solo voice accompanied by orchestra.

BRAVO

Italian for “nicely done”; shouted by audience members after a performance

CADENZA

An ornamented musical elaboration played in a free style by a soloist to display his or her virtuosity.

CHORUS

A section of an opera in which a large group of singers performs together, typically with orchestral accompaniment.

CRESCENDO

A gradual raising of volume in music achieved by increasing the dynamic level. When music crescendos, the performers begin at a softer dynamic level and become incrementally louder.

DIMINUENDO

A gradual lowering of volume in music achieved by decreasing the dynamic level. During a diminuendo, the performers begin at a louder dynamic level and become incrementally softer.

DYNAMICS

A musical trait pertaining to loudness and softness. Dynamics encompass a spectrum from **pianissimo** (very soft) to **piano** (soft) to **mezzo piano** (moderately soft), all the way up to **fortissimo** (very loud). Music can shift to another dynamic level either suddenly or gradually, through a **crescendo** or **diminuendo**.

ENSEMBLE

A musical piece for two or more soloists, accompanied by orchestra. Types of ensembles include **duets** (for two soloists), **trios** (for three soloists), and **quartets** (for four soloists).

FINALE

The last portion of an act, a finale consists of several musical sections that accompany an escalating dramatic tension. Finales frequently consist of multiple ensembles with different numbers of characters.

FORTE

Meaning “loud” or “strong” in Italian, forte is a dynamic level in music that indicates a loud volume. Adding the suffix “-issimo” to a word serves as an intensifier—since forte means “loud,” **fortissimo** means “very loud.”

INTERMISSION

A break between acts of an opera.

LEGATO

A type of articulation in which a melody is played with smooth connection between the notes.

LIBRETTO

The text of an opera, including all the words that are said or sung by performers.

MELODY

A succession of pitches that form an understandable unit. The melody of a piece consists of the tune that a listener can hum or sing.

OVERTURE

An instrumental piece that occurs before the first act as an introduction to an opera.

PIANO

Abbreviated p in a musical score, piano indicates a soft dynamic level.

RECITATIVE

Speech-like singing in-between musical numbers that advances the plot.

RHYTHM

Refers to the way music unfolds over time; it is a series of durations in a range from long to short. Along with pitch, it is a basic and indispensable parameter of music.

SCORE

The complete musical notation for a piece, the score includes notated lines for all of the different instrumental and vocal parts that unite to constitute a musical composition.

TEMPO

Literally “time” in Italian, tempo refers to the speed of a piece of music.

TIMBRE

Pronounced TAM-bruh, a French word that means “sound color.” It refers to the complex combination of characteristics that give each instrument or voice its unique sound.

VOCABULARY

ACTIVITY

Write the letter of the correct match next to each problem.



ACTIVITY

1. _____ **CHORUS**
 2. _____ **SCENES**
 3. _____ **DYNAMICS**
 4. _____ **ADAGIO**
 5. _____ **SCORE**
 6. _____ **INTERMISSION**
 7. _____ **ARIA**
 8. _____ **TIMBRE**
 9. _____ **TEMPO**
 10. _____ **LEGATO**
 11. _____ **OVERTURE**
 12. _____ **ALLEGRO**
 13. _____ **LIBRETTO**
 14. _____ **RECITATIVE**
 15. _____ **ENSEMBLE**
 16. _____ **BRAVO**
 17. _____ **CRESCENDO**
 18. _____ **FINALE**
 19. _____ **DIMINUENDO**
 20. _____ **RHYTHM**
- a. A break between acts of an opera.
 - b. A type of articulation in which a melody is played with smooth connection between the notes.
 - c. The last portion of an act.
 - d. Refers to the speed of a piece of music.
 - e. A way to categorize the sections of operas.
 - f. A musical trait pertaining to loudness and softness.
 - g. A gradual raising of volume in music achieved by increasing the dynamic level.
 - h. A song for solo voice accompanied by orchestra.
 - i. A musical piece for two or more soloists, accompanied by orchestra.
 - j. A tempo marking indicating a moderately fast to quick speed.
 - k. Italian for “nicely done;” shouted by audience members after a performance
 - l. Refers to the complex combination of characteristics that give each instrument or voice its unique sound.
 - m. Speechlike singing in between musical numbers that advances the plot.
 - n. The complete musical notation for a piece,
 - o. The text of an opera.
 - p. Refers to the way music unfolds over time; it is a series of durations in a range from long to short.
 - q. An instrumental piece that occurs before the first act as an introduction to an opera.
 - r. A section of an opera in which a large group of singers performs together, typically with orchestral accompaniment.
 - s. A gradual lowering of volume in music achieved by decreasing the dynamic level.
 - t. A tempo marking that indicates that the performer should play in a slow and leisurely style.

SCIENCE OF SOUND: OPERATIC VOICES

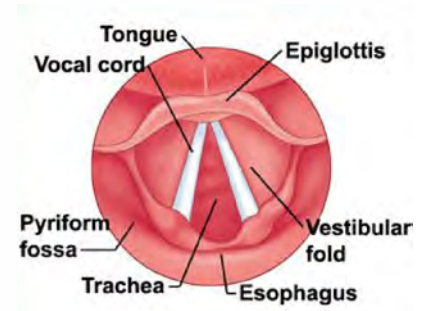
Singing in Europe and America is now generally divided into two categories: classical and popular. What most people think of as operatic or classical singing developed in Europe hundreds of years ago. This style flourished during the seventeenth century as opera became a popular form of entertainment and operatic music increased in complexity. The most recognizable characteristics of a classically trained voice are:

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

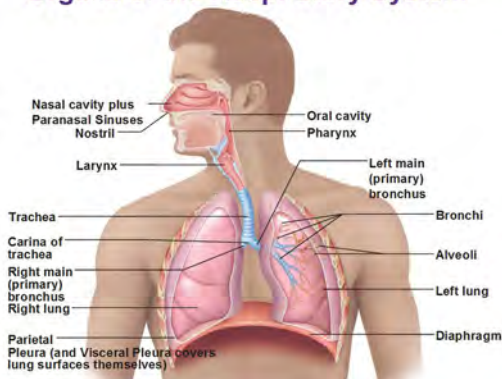
Very few people are born with the capability to sing this way. Classical singers take voice lessons about once a week and practice every day for many years in order to develop a beautiful operatic sound. In fact, most trained voices are not mature enough to perform leading roles on a big stage until they’re at least 28 years old. Compare that with the most popular singers on the radio today who could release their first albums as teenagers!

THE VOCAL CORDS

Science tells us that all sound is made by two things vibrating together. The same concept applies when we talk or sing. The sounds we make are really just the vibration of two little strands of tissue called the vocal chords. The vocal chords are held in the larynx, which is sometimes called the voicebox or (in boys) the Adam’s Apple. When you want to say something, your brain tells your vocal chords to pull together until they’re touching lightly. Then, air pushes through them, and the vocal chords begin to vibrate, opening and closing very quickly. This vibration creates a sound. The pitches you sing are dependent on the speed at which the chords vibrate. A faster vibration creates a higher pitch. The length of the chords also affects the pitch of the voice. Longer chords equal a lower voice.



Organs of the Respiratory System



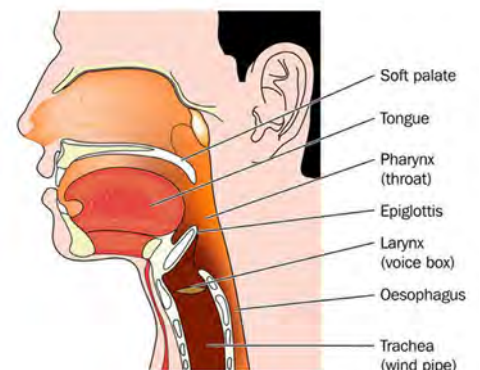
BREATHING/SUPPORT

In order to sing long phrases with a lot of volume and a good tone, singers must breathe in a specific manner, making use of the whole torso area (lungs, ribs, diaphragm and viscera). As they breathe in, each part of this network does its job: the lungs fill up, which forces the ribs to expand and the diaphragm (a flat muscle below the lungs) to move down. As the diaphragm descends, the viscera (stomach, intestines and other organs) are forced down and out. Expelling the air, or singing, is essentially a slow and controlled movement of those muscles. If all of the air escapes from the lungs quickly, the tone of the voice will sound breathy and will lack intensity. Successful opera singers must be able to isolate the diaphragm and ribs, controlling the rate at which they return to their original positions. This allows for a consistent stream of air that travels from the lungs, through the larynx and out of the mouth.

RESONANCE

One of the most obvious characteristics of an operatic voice is a full, resonant tone. Singers achieve this by lifting their soft palate. This is a part of the mouth that most people don’t ever think about and it can be difficult to isolate. Here are some simple exercises to feel where it is and hear the resonance in your voice when you lift it: Start to yawn. Feel that lifting sensation in the back of your mouth? That is the soft palate going up. With a relaxed mouth, slide your tongue along the roof of your mouth, from your teeth back toward your throat. You should feel your tongue go up, then down (that’s your hard palate), then back up again. That soft, fleshy area at the very back is your soft palate. Say the word “who” like you would say it in normal conversation. Now, say “hoooo” like a hoot owl. Can you hear the difference?

Say the sentence “How do you do?” as if you were an old British woman. Lifting the soft palate is the foundation for the resonance in a singer’s voice. With a lot of practice, a singer can lift his or her palate as soon as they begin to sing, without even thinking about it.



SCIENCE OF SOUND: OPERATIC VOICES

If you sing in a choir at school, you're probably already familiar with the different types of voices. We have the same kinds of voice types in opera, but there are a few differences:



Butterfly from *Madama Butterfly*

Sopranos are the highest female voice type, with a range similar to a violin. In opera, they usually sing roles like the daughter, the girlfriend or wife. They can be princesses and good girls, but they can also have some tricks up their sleeves!

Mezzo-sopranos are similar to your choral altos. Their sound is darker and warmer than a soprano. They often play older women, sometimes they play evil women, and sometimes they even play young boys! They can be witches but they can also be attractive – sometimes both at the same time.



Carmen from *Carmen*



Faust from *Faust*

Tenors are the highest male voice type – they often sing roles like the hero, the prince, the boyfriend. They can sound like a trumpet in both range and color. Tenors can be athletic and energetic and they can also be sensitive and emotional. They get all the good high notes and a lot of the applause!



Figaro from *The Barber of Seville*

Baritones fit between choir tenors and basses – not as high as the tenors, but not as low as the basses. They can play both good and bad characters: sometimes they're the boyfriends or brothers – or the ringleader for some comedic shenanigans – but in serious operas they can sometimes be the bad guys.

Basses are the lowest male voice type – they can sound like a bassoon, tuba or low trombone. In a serious opera they can represent age and wisdom (and sometimes evil geniuses), in a comic opera they can make you laugh. Sometimes they steal the show with their super low notes and provide a comforting presence with their warm rumbly tones.



Sarastro from *The Magic Flute*

Think of your favorite story, movie or television show. If that story was to be turned into an opera, what kind of voice types would be best for each of the characters?

You can hear different kinds of voice types in popular music too. Think about your favorite singers – do they have high voices or low voices? What do you like best about the way they sing?

Photos by Tim Wilkerson, Ken Howard, and Jeff Roffman.

SCIENCE OF SOUND: HOW SOUND IS MADE

YOUR SENSE OF SOUND: ENERGY & EQUIPMENT

Sound is important to human beings because it helps us to communicate with each other. Your sense of sound also helps you to enjoy music like opera. Musicians use sounds to communicate thoughts or feelings. But what is sound exactly? How do we hear it?

THE ENERGY: HOW SOUND IS MADE

Sound is vibrating air. Sounds can vibrate in different patterns. These patterns are called sound waves. The different patterns change the sound we hear. Listen to traffic on a busy street. Noise like this is disorganized sound. Now listen to a piece of music. Music is sound and silence that is organized into patterns.

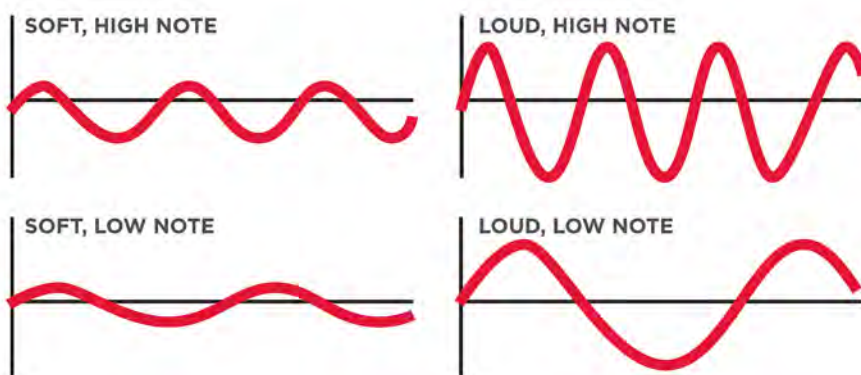
THINK ABOUT IT!

How are the sounds of traffic and music different? How does each sound make you feel? Can traffic sound like music? Can music sound like traffic?

Sound waves can vibrate many times in one second. The number of times a sound wave vibrates in one second is called its frequency. The frequency tells how high or low the sound will be. This is called pitch. High-pitched notes vibrate at a fast rate, so they have a fast frequency. Low-pitched notes have a slow frequency. In opera, the highest pitches are usually sung by women. Very low pitches are sung by men.

Just as the speed of the sound wave determines the pitch, the shape of the wave determines how loud or soft the sound will be. This is called volume.

This is what sound waves look like:



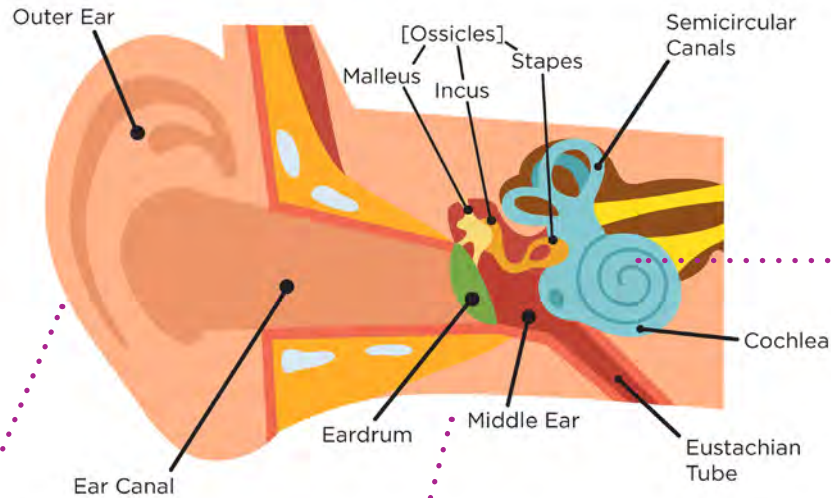
TRY THIS

Stretch a rubber band between your thumb and forefinger on one hand. Pluck it a few times. Can you see and feel the vibrations? What happens if you pluck the rubber band harder? Softer? Change the shape of the rubber band by making it longer and thinner. What do you hear?

ACTIVITY



SCIENCE OF SOUND: HOW SOUND IS MADE



THE OUTER EAR

This is the only part of your ear that you can see. Your outer ear has two jobs: to collect the sound and protect the rest of the ear. Invisible sound waves travel through the air and enter the outer ear through the canal. The canal is the opening in your ear. The outer ear also makes earwax.

THE MIDDLE EAR

After sound waves travel through the canal, they reach your middle ear. The middle ear turns the sound waves into vibrations before it sends them to the inner ear. Sound passes through your eardrum and three tiny bones called ossicles. Each ossicle has a name. They are the malleus (hammer), the incus (anvil), and the stapes (stirrup). The eardrum is a thin piece of skin attached to the hammer. The hammer is attached to the anvil and the anvil is attached to the stirrup. When these three tiny bones vibrate, sound is passed on to the inner ear.

THE INNER EAR

Once vibrations enter your inner ear, they travel to the cochlea. The cochlea is a small, curled tube. It is shaped like a snail's shell. It is filled with liquid and lined with millions of tiny hairs. Vibrations cause the liquid and the hairs to move. Then the hairs change the sound into nerve signals for your brain. The brain interprets the nerve signals and tells you what sound you are hearing.

DID YOU KNOW?
Earwax (the yellowish stuff that forms in your ears) is your friend!

It protects the rest of the parts of your ear from getting dirt in them.

DID YOU KNOW?
The ossicles are the three smallest bones in your body.
The stapes is the tiniest of all!

THE BALANCING ACT

Your ears do more than just hear... they also help keep you standing upright! Three small loops are located directly above the cochlea. The loops are called the semi-circular canals. They help us maintain our balance. The semi-circular canals tell your brain the position of your head – is it looking up? Turned to the left? Your brain determines where your head is and then keeps the rest of your body in line.

Try this! Fill a cup halfway with water. Move the cup around a bit, then stop. Notice how the water keeps swishing around even after the cup is still. Sometimes this happens in your semi-circular canals when you spin around very fast. The fluid that continues to move around in your ear is what makes you feel dizzy!

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY

Write a Review

WRITING ABOUT WHAT WE SEE & HEAR

Reviews of performances are important to every opera company. They help the company know how the performance was enjoyed in the outside world, and get other people excited about coming to see the show!

You are the opera critic. Think about the performance you just saw of *West Side Story* and write your thoughts like you might see in the newspaper or an online review. Remember that a critic reports both the positive and negative features of a production. You might want to focus on one part of the opera that you particularly liked or disliked. Keep in mind that reviews express the opinions of the person who writes the review and different people will often have different ideas about the same performance! Below are some tips to get you started. To write your own review, you can focus on two different elements – what you saw and what you heard.

FACTS & OPINIONS

A review often combines two things – facts and feelings. It is a piece of reporting in which the reviewer tells the reader what he or she saw (facts), and an opinion piece in which the reviewer tells the reader what they liked or didn't like about those elements (opinions). Here is an example of a reviewer reporting what they saw:

“The town plaza is suggested by Paul Steinberg’s dizzyingly colorful set, with a mosaic floor and walls and piñatas hanging from above.”

For the first part of your review, briefly describe what you saw on stage – report what the sets, costumes and lights looked like. These are the facts about the show.

Next, give your opinion about whether you liked these choices. Did they help tell the story effectively?

THE ART OF THE ADJECTIVE

Critics need to have a great vocabulary of descriptive words when they write about what they hear so that the people reading their reviews can imagine what it was like to be there. People use lots of different adjectives to describe the voices of opera singers. Here’s a review that’s chock-full of great adjectives:

“The **light, smoky** baritone of George Gagnidze only hints at Rigoletto’s outsize emotions, and the **sweet, pure** soprano of Lisette Oropesa keeps Gilda **sweet** but **inert**. The **handsome, hyperactive** tenor Vittorio Grigolo has two registers, bellowing and crooning, and the conductor, Marco Armiliato, has his hands full trying to keep up with Mr. Grigolo’s **wayward** tempos.”

Sometimes it is very hard to describe the way music makes us feel. While there are definitely objective facts we can evaluate when we listen to music (qualities like loud or soft, fast or slow) most of the time we listen subjectively. This means that every opinion is valid – you don’t have to know anything about opera to be moved by someone’s singing or a beautiful instrumental solo.

Write a few sentences about the character you liked best and why. How did the music help tell you who the character was? Think of five adjectives to describe the way that person’s voice sounded to you. How did it made you feel to listen to them?

ACTIVITY

SUM IT ALL UP

In your opinion, what did you like best about the production? What did you think could use some improvement? Would you recommend that other people come see this opera?

Share your critique with us! The Atlanta Opera wants to know what you thought of our performance. If you would like to share your review with us, please send it on!

The Atlanta Opera Education Department
1575 Northside Dr. NW, Suite 350
Atlanta, GA 30318
or education@atlantaopera.org

POST-SHOW ACTIVITY

Write a Letter

ACTIVITY

Goal: To reflect on the performance experience and to practice writing skills.

When: After the performance.

Explanation: After the show, students will write letters to *West Side Story* performers or to ArtsBridge donors whose support keeps field trip tickets accessibly priced for school groups.

Activity:

1. After attending the performance, discuss the experience with your students. Use the following discussing questions to guide the conversation:

- What was the show about?
- What parts of the show were most exciting?
- Which character did you enjoy the most? Why?
- What did the characters learn?

2. Next, invite students to write a letter to the performers or to ArtsBridge donors about their theater experience.

a. Letter Example #1

Dear *West Side Story* Performers,
My favorite part of the show was....
While watching your show I felt... because...
I have drawn a picture of the scene when....
If I could be in your show, I would play the part of ... because...

b. Letter Example #2

Dear ArtsBridge donors,
Thank you for helping my class go to the Cobb Energy Centre to see *West Side Story*! My favorite part of the show was.... While I was watching the show I felt... because... I have drawn a picture of the scene when... This experience was special because...

3. After writing the letter, students can illustrate a scene from the performance.

4. Last, mail the letters to use and we'll make sure they get to the right people.

ArtsBridge Foundation

Attn: Education Department
2800 Cobb Galleria Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30339

Follow-Up Discussion Questions:

- What did you choose to share in your letter? Why?
- How does receiving a letter make you feel?
- How do you think the recipient of your letter will feel when he or she receives your letter? Why?
- Why do you think the performers choose to make being a performer their career?
- Why do you think people give money to help students like you attend ArtsBridge performances at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre?



Photo by Lynn Lane

STANDARDS

Georgia Standards of Excellence for *West Side Story*

ELA - Reading Literary

ELAGSE9-10RL3

ELAGSE9-10RL9

ELAGSE11-12RL3

ELAGSE11-12RL7

- *About the Performance*
- *About the Creators*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Opera 101*
- *Opera in Atlanta*

ELA - Writing

ELAGSE9-10W1

ELAGSE11-12W1

- *Post-Show Activities*
- *Write a Review*

ELA - Speaking and Listening

ELAGSE9-10SL1

ELAGSE11-12SL1

- *Pre-Show Activities*
- *Musical Spotlight*
- *Post-Show Activities*
- *Romeo and Juliet*

Social Studies

SSWG2

SSSocIC1

- *Pre-Show Activities*
- *Romeo and Juliet*

Music - Critical Analysis/ Investigate

MHS.6 (Band, Chorus, Orchestra)

MHS.7 (Band, Chorus, Orchestra)

- *Opera 101*
- *Opera in Atlanta*
- *Important Jobs at the Opera*
- *Opera Vocabulary*
- *Vocabulary Activity*
- *The Science of Sound: Operatic Voices*
- *The Science of Sound: How Sound is Made*

Music - Cultural and Historical Context

MHS.8 (Band, Chorus, Orchestra)

MHS.9 (Band, Chorus, Orchestra)

- *Musical Spotlight*
- *Opera 101*
- *Opera in Atlanta*
- *Important Jobs at the Opera*
- *Opera Vocabulary*
- *Vocabulary Activity*
- *The Science of Sound: Operatic Voices*
- *The Science of Sound: How Sound is Made*

Theatre Arts - Responding

TAHSA.RE.1

TAHSA.RE.2

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Post-Show Activities*
- *Write a Review*

Theatre Arts - Responding

TAHSA.CN.1

TAHSA.CN.2

- *Pre-Show Activities*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Important Jobs at the Opera*
- *Post-Show Activities*

RESOURCES AND SOURCES

Web Sources

<https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/IgJCyxXwWyd8Kg>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leonard-Bernstein>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jerome-Robbins>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Arthur-Laurents>

Additional Resources

<https://www.westsidestory.com/>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/search/exhibit?project=west-side-story>

<https://leonardbernstein.com/at100>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/IgJCyxXwWyd8Kg>

Additional Activities

https://www.carnegiehall.org/uploadedFiles/Resources_and_Components/PDF/WMI/Soundfly_Suppliment_AW.PDF

<https://gpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/6ba5ba5e-9d05-498f-927c-5c6218afaefb/rita-moreno-west-side-story/#.Wyfl0qdKiM8>

Great Recordings

<https://bernstein.classical.org/collections/west-side-story/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80-DtChQ39U>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujxHq8i7fgE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOFecAiQpYk&list=PLM4jisk6pqrwsWxKpePQVuhpsFleD24Qf>



Photo by Lynn Lane