

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Opera for Children: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing, Directing, Producing, and Touring Children's Opera

STUDENT: Briana Sosenheimer

DEGREE: Doctor of Arts

COLLEGE: Fine Arts

DATE: December 2015

PAGES: 213

Opera for Children: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing, Directing, Producing, and Touring Children's Opera presents an organized approach to creating and producing an opera performed specifically for children in elementary schools by a group of pre-professional or professional opera singers with piano accompaniment. Commonly-used opera plots include fairy tales or stories to which children can relate that teach about specific themes, cultures, and morals.

The chapters in this guide focus on the chronological steps for creating a successful children's opera production. This dissertation examines the technique of *pastiche* along with the step-by-step creation, production, performance, and proposed curriculum for my own children's opera, titled *Sam the Snake Saves the Day*. The guide contains a discussion of successful outcomes and challenges of *Sam the Snake Saves the Day*, suggesting steps to take for future productions. It includes an explanation of how to write, direct, produce, and tour children's opera from personal experience so others who are unfamiliar with this genre or need guidance can use it as a reference. The information contained in this guide can assist a director at any stage of a production period regardless of resources available or

time constraints. Chapter six includes a curriculum guide to accompany *Sam the Snake Saves the Day* with educational material for grades K-5 corresponding to the opera. This material presents background information and activities to prepare a class for viewing the opera as well as basic elements of music, singing, and theatre. Although the performers of my production cast consisted of mostly university students in an educational setting, the guide remains beneficial for directors of professional opera companies because it provides basic guidance for any children's opera production. This guide concludes with recommendations for future study and encourages directors to use these materials when producing their own children's opera. The appendices contain sample audition postings, audition forms, travel itineraries, letters to schools, pictures, and the musical score of *Sam the Snake Saves the Day*.