

Opera Colorado Education & Community Programs Fact Sheet

2012-2013

What is the Education & Community Programs department?

This department produces educational programs for school-age students and adults. The Education staff, sometimes with the Opera Colorado Young Artists, travels to schools and community venues, across the state of Colorado, to present their programs. Education programs support Colorado Academic Standards with a special emphasis on 21st Century Workforce Readiness Skills. In addition to direct contact with teaching artists, the staff provides teaching materials for each of its programs to help offer a deeper educational experience.

Why do they exist?

This department brings opera to audiences who might not otherwise experience it, including rural areas of Colorado and lower-income schools. There are two results: opera continues as a vital, vibrant and important art form, and new audiences are developed.

Who are the Opera Colorado Young Artists?

The Opera Colorado Young Artists are a select group of five emerging opera singers who are in residency with Opera Colorado for a period of seven months. During their residency, the Young Artists perform abridged touring productions for student and adult audiences and gain valuable experience by participating in Opera Colorado's mainstage productions. Once each year, the Young Artists perform the leading roles in one of the season's operas in a special Student Matinee production. These singers also receive training and coaching from Opera Colorado staff and guest artists and participate in master classes and other career-building opportunities throughout their residency.

What programs do they produce?

While some programs can be brought directly to schools or community venues, there are others programs that take place at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. Students get a chance to experience a working dress rehearsal of an Opera Colorado mainstage performance in the Student Dress Rehearsal program. They can attend a special Student Matinee production of a mainstage opera, which for 2012-2013 will be Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*. The opera house becomes a living classroom in the Backstage Workshop program, where students learn about conducting, singing, wig and make-up, stage combat and other production elements through interactive workshop sessions. The programs that can be brought to schools and community groups include their two touring one-act operas, which change from season to season. For the 2012-2013 school year, they are touring Rossini's famous comedy, *The Barber of Seville* and Bizet's masterpiece, *Carmen*. These performances are followed by a question and answer session between the performers and the audience. Other programs include *Arias & Ensembles*, a concert-style program featuring opera's greatest hits with opera trivia and facts included and *POPerA*, a program designed to teach students about opera in popular culture. Their largest undertaking is their residency program entitled, Generation OC. In this program, students learn to apply 21st Century Workforce Readiness Skills using the arts, and specifically opera, as a catalyst. Generation OC can be incorporated into any curriculum or class subject and can be tailored to meet the specific needs of teachers and students.

The programs conducted by the Education & Community Programs department are models of what integrated arts curriculum can look like and are at the forefront of creative arts education.