



FORT WORTH OPERA

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FORT WORTH OPERA'S EDUCATIONAL OPERA FUNATICS PROGRAM TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MUSIC TEACHERS

FORT WORTH, TX -- Fort Worth Opera (FWO), a mission-driven nonprofit, is excited to announce today that the company's music education program, *Opera FUNatics*, will soon be implemented by eight Fort Worth ISD music teachers. Beginning in March of 2019, six elementary schools and two middle schools will teach this inspiring curriculum designed by FWO's Manager of Education and Community Awareness, **Sheran Goodspeed Keyton**.

"After the success of our inaugural *Opera FUNatics* two week intensive this past summer, I was very anxious to see how we could utilize this great curriculum to teach even more children about opera," said Keyton. Partnering with Fort Worth ISD is the first of many steps to introduce children to not only opera performances, but also the vast number of other potential careers involved in the production of an opera. Give a man a fish, and he will be hungry again to-morrow; teach him to catch a fish, and he will be richer all his life."

Participating schools will receive a full curriculum, including twelve weeks of lesson plans highlighting the fundamentals of music theory (rhythm, melody, harmony, and the construction of music), key opera terminology, and an analysis of Western music history (medieval to the 21st century). The program will also provide students with a detailed breakdown of classical voice types, operatic styles, and an overview of famous opera singers and composers who have impacted the art form over time.

Video and audio files will be included as part of the teacher's orientation packet to supplement each lesson plan. Throughout the entire session, FWO staff will visit the two participating middle schools to discuss marketing, stagecraft, choreography, and the business of music, while the **FWO-TCU Lesley Artists** will be performing **Michael Ching's *Three Pigs Remix*** at all schools, an extension of the company's Children's Opera Theatre season.

Kacie Kresta, a participating music teacher at **Glencrest 6th Grade School**, said, "These kids are looking for an outlet however they can get it. The awesome part about this program is that it's going to be hands on. *Opera FUNatics* is something tangible for them, and it's coming here. They are actually going to be in the room with the performance. The visual element is so important to them, and that is what opera brings. It's the visual side of music and stories, versus reading a book, singing on stage as a choir or a soloist. That is what will keep them engaged, and it's more important now than ever before."

Following the twelve-week program, each school will complete a detailed evaluation. Students will fill out a knowledge-based assessment, and participating music teachers will share with Fort Worth Opera's education department their conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the program. As *Opera FUNatics* evolves, so will its curriculum while the company looks to expand this unique music education program throughout the city of Fort Worth and surrounding schools districts.

ABOUT FORT WORTH OPERA: Founded in 1946, Fort Worth Opera is the oldest continually performing opera company in Texas, and one of the 14 oldest opera companies in the United States. The organization has received national attention from critics and audiences alike for its artistic excellence.

Fort Worth Opera has taken a leadership role in engaging audiences beyond the operatic stage, while producing cutting-edge, contemporary operas. Beginning in 2017, FWO Opera launched the second phase of its landmark, 10-year *Opera of the Americas* initiative with *Noches de Ópera (Nights of Opera)*, a groundbreaking campaign which introduces powerful operas, each reflecting the diverse cultures of American audiences.

Fort Worth Opera is sponsored in part by awards from The Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County, The City of Fort Worth, and the Texas Commission on the Arts. Additional Fort Worth Opera sponsors include: the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Amon G. Carter Foundation; American Airlines; Art & Seek; Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust, Bank of America, Trustee; The Pangburn Foundation, J.P. Morgan Chase, Trustee; and the Sid W. Richardson Foundation.