



151 West 26th Street
New York, NY, 10001
212.647.1100
www.TWUSA.org

presents
Opera Soup Productions'

A Musical Toast to Marian Anderson

International opera singer, music educator, and parent, Lori Brown Mirabal, created Opera Soup Productions to introduce opera essentials to young audiences and families. To that purpose, the shows have been designed to entertain, to inform, to encourage creative thinking skills, and to spark an interest for an on going and more in depth relationship between the learning community, the field of opera, and other areas of life and the performing arts. Accordingly, the music for these presentations has been carefully selected and prepared to incorporate national standards in music such as:

- (6) *“Listening to, analyzing, and describing music;”*
- (7) *“Evaluating music and music performances;”*
- (8) *“Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts;”* and
- (9) *Understanding music in relation to history and culture.”*

“A Musical Toast to Marian Anderson” is designed for third grade through middle school students and family audiences. The legacy of African American Contralto, Marian Anderson is explored by integrating historical narrative with classical song repertoire. The presentation begins when the performer, dressed as the sorceress “Ulrica” (from Giuseppe Verdi’s opera *Un Ballo in Maschera*), enters singing the “Invocation to the Powers of Darkness” aria. Marian Anderson made her historic debut at the Metropolitan Opera singing this role, which made her the first African American artist featured at the that opera house. The show is approximately 45 minutes long and there will be time for questions and answers after the presentation.

Background:

Born into a poor family in Philadelphia on February 27, 1897, Marian Anderson overcame prejudice and other social and financial challenges to become one of the most celebrated singers from the 1930’s - 50’s. She was also known as a great humanitarian and a treasured world citizen.

Essential Words:

- (1) Opera An Opera is a *story* told through *music*
- (2) Composer The music is created by the composer
- (3) Score The music in an opera is also called a score
- (4) Libretto The story in an opera is also called the libretto
- (5) Orchestra A group of 50 to 100 musicians who play the music in an opera
- (6) Opera Singers A group of people who sing in operas
- (7) Soprano A high female singer
- (8) Mezzo-Soprano A singer who sings high and low but mostly middle voice parts/roles
- (9) Contralto A low female singer
- (10) Tenor A high male singer
- (11) Baritone A male singer who sings high and low but mostly uses the middle part of his voice.
- (12) Bass A low male singer
- (13) Characters The many different types of people who appear in an opera
- (14) Aria Songs in opera are called arias. They help a singer to show what they are feeling
- (15) Recitative The words that are sung just before an aria
- (16) Brava Good job (female)
- (17) Bravo Good job (male)
- (18) Bravi Good job (more than one person)
- (19) Art Song A poem set to music
- (20) Spiritual An African American religious folk song, often from Bible stories
- (21) Patriotic Song A song that expresses pride for a country

Post Event Activities:

- (1) Students can learn more about Marian Anderson and Eleanor Roosevelt using the following web articles or the books listed below. Students could then write a brief report comparing the lives of these two women or choose another creative way to convey what they learned about one or both of these historical figures.
 - Marian Anderson - <http://www.lkwdpl.org/wihohio/ande-mar.htm>
 - Eleanor Roosevelt - [http://www.biography.com/articles/\(Anna\)-Eleanor-Roosevelt-9463366](http://www.biography.com/articles/(Anna)-Eleanor-Roosevelt-9463366)

 - (2) Using the following web links students could learn more about the poem Der Erlkonig:
 - (<http://german.about.com/library/blerlking.htm>)
 - (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10MKStHFm04>)

 - (3) Using the text from this poem students could either:
 - a. Compose an aria using music of student's choice;
 - b. Compose an art song using music of student's choice;
 - c. Create another poem or rap; or
 - d. Draw a picture

(Note: A class CD might evolve from combining the above creations. If artwork is created then students could choose one or more designs as a cover for the CD)
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Books of Interest for Young Readers:

- When Marian Sang, by Pam Munoz Ryan
- Eleanor Roosevelt (A biography), by Kem Knapp Sawyer