



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 5, 2019

Contact: Gabrielle Kazuko Nomura Gainor, 206.676.5559, gabrielle.gainor@seattleopera.org

Press image: <https://seattleopera.smugmug.com/Events/Robin-Hood/n-k7BhXD/>

Images are of last year's Youth Opera Project performance of *Robin Hood*

Password: "press" (case sensitive)

Seattle Opera presents fun, low-cost opera experiences for kids and families

***Odyssey* plays March 1-3, 2019 Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center**

SEATTLE — Did you know that opera is fun for kids? This spring, The Youth Opera Project presents an affordable opera for children and families called [*Odyssey*](#). Geared for all ages, *Odyssey* tells the story of Odysseus and his courageous crew who face monsters, tempests, sorcery, and the gods themselves on an epic journey home. Performed by youth ages 7–18 and accompanied by a professional chamber orchestra, this timeless story examines choices that guide and foster our humanity. The cost is \$5 for youth 18 and under, and \$15 for adults—but no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Johanna Mergener, who also sings with Seattle Opera's Teen Vocal Studio, will perform in *Odyssey* this year after appearing in Youth Opera Project's *Robin Hood* in 2018.

"Presenting new and relevant operas like *Robin Hood* and *Odyssey* gives students who want to pursue opera an unforgettable experience," she said.

Mergener, along with her co-stars, are participants in a program [called The Youth Opera Project](#), a Seattle Opera program developed in partnership with Seattle Public Theater. This comprehensive training program takes place every year from September to March, guiding youth through singing, acting, dancing, and the entire process of bringing an opera to the stage. The experience culminates with a professionally staged production at Cornish Playhouse each spring. Any child or teen can participate, and Seattle Opera provides financial assistance for those who need it.

But participating in Youth Opera Project or attending an *Odyssey* performance is only one way for young people to engage in the art form. This winter and spring, Seattle Opera will also offer camps and experiences for youth from toddlers to tweens—and all on the Seattle Center campus.

[Opera Time at the Opera Center](#), an interactive musical story time for children ages 2–5, will be offered on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings starting in February. (A free session on the first Saturday of the month will be offered starting in May). Opera Time offers children and their parent/guardian the chance to explore different narratives through singing, acting, dancing, and visual arts.

"We're excited to expand our early learning programs at the Opera Center," said **Sara Litchfield**, Youth & Family Programs Manager. "We will read and sing our way through storybooks while introducing children to opera and the performing arts."

In April, Seattle Opera will offer [Spring Break camps](#) for grades 1–8. Participants will receive vocal, theatrical, and movement training in an encouraging environment that inspires self-expression through the performing arts. All campers will have the opportunity to share what they've learned in a performance for their families.

"Opera Camps are a great opportunity for children to express themselves through the arts," said **Alejandra Valarino Boyer**, Director of Programs and Partnerships.

“We provide experiences for young people regardless of experience level, and no one will ever be turned away for lack of funds.”

Odyssey: A Youth Opera or Families

Music by Ben Moore

Libretto by Kelley Rourke

Commissioned by The Glimmerglass Festival, 2015

7 p.m., Friday, March 1

2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Saturday, March 2

2 p.m., on Sunday, March 3

Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center

201 Mercer St, Seattle, WA 98109

Youth 18 & under: \$5; Adults: \$15.

[Request financial assistance.](#)

Performance running time: under an hour.

About Seattle Opera

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest with performances of the highest caliber and through innovative educational and engagement programs for all. Each year, more than 85,000 people attend Seattle Opera performances, and more than 400,000 people of all ages are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. By drawing our communities together, and by offering opera’s unique fusion of music and drama, we create life-enhancing experiences that speak deeply to people’s hearts and minds. Connect with Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on Classical King FM. 98.1.

###