

KENTUCKY OPERA

Youth Opera Project 26-27 Season Overview

WHAT IS YOUTH OPERA PROJECT?

Explore the excitement of singing and the thrill of theatre with Kentucky Opera's Youth Opera Project. Learn from professionals in a nurturing and engaging environment as you prepare to represent Kentucky Opera as one of its performing company members. This program is intended for ages 8-18. All skill levels are welcome; no experience necessary!

FACULTY

Dr. Grace Ashley, Teaching Artist

Dr. Taylor Burkhardt, Head of Music (Youth Programs Administrator)

Ben Robinson, General Director + CEO

SCHEDULE

Youth Opera Project holds regular Monday rehearsals from 5-7pm at the Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health, located at 708 Magazine St., Louisville, KY 40203. Additional rehearsals will be scheduled as needed to prepare for performances. JCPS closures and Kentucky Opera office closures will be observed.

Season Highlights:

Monday, August 17, 2026	Kick-off Meeting and First Rehearsal
Saturday, September 12, 2026	Costume Couture: Fête de Josette
Monday, September 14, 2026	Casting Auditions
Friday, December 11, 2026	Christmas Cabaret Performance 1
Sunday, December 13, 2026	Christmas Cabaret Performance 2
Sunday, May 23, 2027	Scenes Program
Friday, June 25, 2027	<i>The Child and the Spells</i> Performance 1
Saturday, June 26, 2027	<i>The Child and the Spells</i> Performance 2
Sunday, June 27, 2027	<i>The Child and the Spells</i> Performance 3

See full schedule for more details.

PROGRAM FEE

The price of the program is **\$1,000** per child for the yearlong program, including the intensive camp leading up to *The Child and the Spells*, and may be paid in installments according to an arranged payment plan over the course of the program. A sliding scale based on demonstrated need will be instituted for the 26-27 season—please email youthprograms@kyopera.org for more information. Payments may be made online at kyopera.org or via cash or check.

WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY

Notice of withdrawal from the program must be submitted to youthprograms@kyopera.org.

- Students who withdraw prior to the first session will receive a full refund of what has been paid.
- Students who withdraw within 14 calendar days after the program has started will be refunded 50% of what has been paid.
- Students who wish to withdraw more than 14 calendar days after the program has started will not be refunded.
- Refunds will be made in the same method as the original purchase.

CASTING

Casting auditions for the Christmas Cabaret, spring scenes program, *The Child and the Spells*, and other possible performance opportunities will take place Monday, September 14 from 6-8pm at the Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health. Students should prepare a solo vocal excerpt, with or without piano accompaniment, that best showcases their abilities. Audition sign-ups will be available at least two weeks prior to the audition date.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Additional performance opportunities may arise, such as singing at a baseball game, a donor event, or at various community events. Participants of the program will be notified at least two weeks in advance and will be given the opportunity to audition for any solos. Rehearsals for these opportunities will take place on Mondays during the 5-7p time frame.

YOP students are also eligible for participation in our Overture program, which provides opportunities for students to see final dress rehearsals of Kentucky Opera shows at no cost. Space for guardians may be limited to one guardian per student, and availability is subject to a first-come, first-serve basis.

REHEARSAL PROCEDURES

Rehearsal Structure

Regular rehearsal lasts for two hours and is a mixture of vocal technique and warm-up, music rehearsal, acting work, and staging work. There is one ten-minute break given about halfway through rehearsal that participants may bring a small snack for, to be consumed only during this time. We ask that participants do not bring any snacks that require use of the microwave.

Absence Policy

Regular attendance is crucial for learning music for performances, building relationships, and advancing as a performer. If you are aware of any conflicts with the schedule at the beginning of the season, please contact us at youthprograms@kyopera.org as soon as possible. If an unavoidable last-minute conflict arises, please contact Taylor and/or Grace via call, text, or email.

Drop-off and Pick-up

For participants 11 years of age or younger:

Parents or guardians must bring their child into the rehearsal or performance space and sign them in upon drop-off. Please come to the same drop-off location when picking up your child, sign them out, and we will release them.

For participants 12 years of age or older:

Participants may be dropped off and picked up at the Opera Center without a parent or guardian signing them in. However, the front doors of the opera center are locked, and an opera employee or volunteer must let them in—please ensure that they have made it inside before leaving. Other rehearsal or performance venues may require different protocols, which will be specified ahead of time.

Parent/Guardian Volunteers

Volunteers are often needed for performances to help backstage, in dressing rooms, and as chaperones for off-site opportunities such as ballgames. Parents and guardians will have the opportunity to sign up before each performance. Any admission fee for performances ticketed by Kentucky Opera will be covered for confirmed volunteers.

Contact Us:

Taylor Burkhardt, Head of Music

Email: youthprograms@kyopera.org

Grace Ashley, Teaching Artist

Email: youthprograms@kyopera.org

Ben Robinson, General Director + CEO

Email: brobinson@kyopera.org

