

Careers in Opera

While the opera singer gets most of the attention, there are many ways to have a career in the world of opera including:

Arts Administration

Executive Director, Artistic Director, Business Manager, Box Office Manager, Marketing Director, Development/Fundraising Director, Education/Outreach Director, Volunteer Manager, Board Member

Costumes

Costume Designer, Costume Construction and Repair, Dresser, Costume Shop Manager, Wig Designer, Make-up Designer

Lighting

Lighting Designer, Lightboard Operator, Spotlight Operator

Orchestra

Orchestra Conductor, Musician

Performance

Soloist, Chorister, Dancer, Supernumerary

Production

Stage Director, Production Manager, Choreographer, Production Assistant, Prop Manager, Prop Designer, Set Designer, Set Builder

Sound

Sound Designer, Soundboard Operator

Theatre

Theatre Director, House Manager, Usher, Box Office Manager, Concessions Manager

Examples

An **Executive Director** manages the business-side of an opera company and an **Artistic Director** oversees productions of operas.

A **Stage Director** is needed to make sure that everyone goes where they are supposed to on stage. This direction takes place during rehearsals where the director gives blocking to the singers.

A **Stage Manager** is hired to manage all of the logistics of a production. He/she maintains the rehearsal schedule and acts as a liaison between the cast and the production crew.

A **Set Designer** draws small-scale pictures of the set and oversees the building of them.

All of the clothing that the singers wear during an opera are called costumes. A **Costume Designer** draws and often aids in the sewing of the costumes for the production.

Makeup Designers aid the performers in looking more like their characters using makeup and wigs.

After all the physical elements have been rehearsed and designed, a **Lighting Designer** is brought in to set the atmosphere for the scene using stage lighting.

All of the physical items that singers use on stage to aid in acting their parts such as swords, baskets, notes, lanterns, etc. are called props. A **Props Designer** is responsible for all props in the production—that includes acquiring them, keeping them organized, and making sure they're used safely. To do this, the props designer leads a team of prop makers or props-department runners.

Many operas utilize dancers in ball and party scenes, ballets, and other special events in the opera. A **Choreographer** designs these dances using the music provided by the composer and teaches them to the singers and dancers.