

# AmazingVox School Residencies

Comments from across the United States

[www.WinbergAndStevens.com](http://www.WinbergAndStevens.com)



## Elementary and Middle Schools

*I first thought presenting an opera themed assembly for our elementary children would be a stretch for their attention span and understanding curve. I was proven wrong on both fronts. The children were very attentive and genuinely interested in everything; singing in so many languages and stories that included geography lessons. As a culminating activity, the Social Studies lessons for our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade children were an extra bonus. **The Social Studies teachers said they learned new ways to present social studies activities to students that would make their lesson plans more interactive.***

*I would, with enthusiasm, recommend this assembly not only to elementary aged children but also to all ages; as there is something for everyone.*

- **Larry Armbrust, Centennial Elementary School Principal, Oregon**

*The students and staff at both schools REALLY dug it! I must admit I was skeptical, but even the "cool" high school kids were into the program. I won't make any more "not until the fat lady sings" jokes.*

- **Downieville and Pliocene Ridge (K-12) Schools Principal, California**

*Not only did you provide beautiful music and wonderful learning experiences to our students and our staff, but you also brought with you and excitement and enthusiasm that seems to be lingering, even in your absence. **Your kind words and sincere smiles have made a lasting impression.***

- **Ann Giove, Head Teacher, Monadnock Area School, New Hampshire**

*Thanks sooooo much!! You were awesome!! What a great presentation!*

- **Nancy Watson, Math Teacher, Presque Isle Middle School, Maine**

*I must admit that I had grave reservations when I heard there would be an assembly with "opera" as the subject. I remained wary until you got the first laugh, then a "buzz" throughout the audience, then your conductor's controlling hand, which effectively brought the audience back to your next thought. You had our middle-schoolers in your hand, which is a challenge! What a difference it made to come interact with the audience! **After the assembly, watching my students totally entertained/educated for a class period, my reservations totally melted away.***

- **Jim Bogue, Teacher, Fort Bragg Middle School, California**

## Portsmouth Herald New Hampshire

### Middle school opera

KITTERY, Maine - Shapleigh Middle School sixth-graders played toreadors, gypsies and bulls during their performance of excerpts from "Carmen" Monday afternoon. As part of an effort to bring more music into the classroom, the students on the Whale Sharks team have been listening and singing various styles of music throughout the year. The kids learned "Carmen's" "Toreador Song," in the original French, as part of a language arts project. During their performance, the sixth-graders taunted angry bulls with red flags while a gallery of gypsies, soldiers and bandits cheered - or rather sang - them on.



Whale Sharks teachers Agnes Bowen and Doreen Carson said they began working on the piece a week ago and pulled together the sets and costumes in a few days. To put the finishing touches on the performance, Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg of the educational performance group Amazing Voices came to Shapleigh Monday morning. In a few hours, the duo taught the students a few dance steps, how to better project their voices and the importance of acting while singing.

Stevens and Winberg have performed with well-known opera companies all over the world, including those in New York City; Milan and Torino, Italy; and Taipei, Taiwan. For the last three years, they have been offering school residencies between performance engagements and have visited about 100 schools in the past year and a half. Before the sixth-graders went on, Winberg and Stevens taught the rest of the school, 700 strong, as well as a number of parents who came for the show, about the ins and outs of opera. The duo also performed excerpts with the help of a few shy student volunteers.

For some kids, performing opera might be horrific torture, but for these sixth-graders, it was one of the year's more exciting projects. "It was extremely fun," said sixth-grader Tyler Nay. "I think we should do it again." "I thought it was going to be just singing," said student Katelin Johnson. "We really had to start acting." The fact that the children enjoyed the project was no surprise to Bowen and Carson.

## High Schools

*Roy and Annalisa demonstrated that they are excellent teachers in addition to being accomplished singers and performers. Whether working in seminar, master class, or school assembly formats, they offered our students their expertise and shared their stories in a respectful, humorous, and winning manner.*

- **T. Sumner, Headmaster, Charlemont Academy, Massachusetts**

*I was so impressed with the way you wove opera into so many content areas such as history-social science, geography, science, and foreign language, and made it relevant to the lives of these young students. Your program and style were a great match and very engaging for the K-8 grade audiences. My husband (Richard Holmes, Superintendent of Siskiyou High School District) was very impressed with your effect at both the **Continuation and regular High Schools.***

- **Karen Holmes, Dir. of Curriculum, Siskiyou Co. Office of Ed.**

*It was an awesome experience for both the teachers and students. **Fabulous!** They led us through history, foreign countries, kinds of operas, styles of singing and how they relate to today, made a clear analogy of today's rap music and opera from four hundred years ago, they described how directors and producers interpret the same work differently through time and place. **I have to tell you they were absolutely GREAT. Our students were mesmerized at their talent not only as singers and performers, but as common everyday people who just happen to be world renowned opera stars.***

- **Ellen McArron, Dunsmuir High School, California**

*Annalisa Winberg and Roy Stevens completely engaged our entire student body with their Amazing Human Voice Assembly and had a deep individual impact on students in German, Italian and Drama Classes.*

- **Kathy Brownback, Phillips Exeter Academy, New Hampshire**

## Students, K-12

*I thought your assembly was going to REEK, but it was AWE-SOME!! Thank you SO MUCH for coming to our school!!*

- **11th grade student from Belfast Area High School, Maine**

*To be honest with you, I'm not really a big opera fan, I'm a Rap and Soul music fan. You encouraged me to give it a chance. I never wanted to listen to opera, but when I heard you sing, I wanted to hear more. I also wanted to get up there and sing with you! **I felt that if I gave opera a chance I could like it, maybe even love it!***

- **7<sup>th</sup> grade student, Chambersburg Middle School, Pennsylvania**

*I liked your presentation. I learned a lot. I like how you presented opera. **It was cool, funny, and strange at the same time.** I never knew opera was so cool. I will never forget the different languages. I wish you could come again.*

- **6<sup>th</sup> grade student, Palermo Consolidated School, Maine**

*Dear Opra Gests:*

*Thank you for coming and teach us adout singing. **You sing laud and you are grate.***

*Sincerely,*

- **2nd grade student, Forks Elementary School, Washington**