

Jill Kinmont Boothe School

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January 7, 2009

To whom it may concern:

When I first encountered Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg in 2004, I was principal for a campus of three schools in a very rural and challenged area of the California Sierras. I was looking for art and music enrichment and was amused by the idea of opera in the High Desert. Certainly it would be novel for my students and their families. My population was over 10% special education students, 30% minority and 20% low socioeconomic populations. We educated kindergarten through high school and had established a community day school for expelled students. We served everyone in our area.

What I did not anticipate was that the experience of developing a presentation and presenting a performance would yield benefits in community unity, student self esteem and a host of social skills. Our two "opera people" brought music, history, art, and a glimpse of the cultures outside our little school. More than that, they believed in every student's ability to contribute to the performance. Consequently every student did contribute and for a night every student was a "star".

Special education students who read on a kindergarten level in 5th grade had speaking parts. Students from generational poverty who wore the same clothes every day had makeup and costumes that gleamed in the night. Students whose parents rarely noticed them because of drug and alcohol use were applauded. Students who were on grade level and were basically successful were elevated to dream of futures they had never imagined. And it was really a fine performance by any measure!

Over the years, the "opera people" returned and stayed for a couple of days and each year we had the same experience. I moved to another school for the high school at risk population and they encouraged students to sing and perform who had just been released from juvenile hall and were battling serious addiction problems. Roy and Annalisa accepted them as potential performers and so the students believed in their abilities. Again there was that wonderful magic! The performances were amazing! The side benefits were there again – increased self esteem, acceptance by the community, new social skills, and hope.

These two "opera people" were more than they seemed. Just like good theater, they provided a special world in which the ordinary was transformed. They opened the eyes of the community and the students to the potential in their own ordinary lives. This is the kind of magic our children need. May they visit your town so you can have the experience of AmazingVox.

Nancy Williard
Alternative Education Director
Inyo County Superintendent of Schools
nancy_williard@inyo.k12.ca.us



EMILIE J. ROSS MIDDLE SCHOOL

P.O. BOX 189 7448 FOX ROAD
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MATTHEW SHIPLEY, PRINCIPAL
DENNIS CYPHERS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Tradition With The Future In Mind

June 18, 2007

Prospective "Amazing Vox" Client,

Having no experience with "The Amazing Vox" project, I was unsure what to expect when Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg came to our middle school to stage an opera scene as part of a district-wide After School Programs "Performance Project." I soon realized that we were in for a treat! Needless to say, I was more than a little surprised with the amount of time and the energy Roy and Annalisa spent working with students over the span of a week. They provided all of those individuals lucky enough to participate with a comprehensive educational program that not only focused on specifically preparing the Performance Project, but also included elements on costuming, historical discussions, multicultural elements, lessons on the human condition as depicted in opera, as well as the history of opera and its development into modern musical theatre.

Roy and Annalisa are consummate professionals with boundless energy who transmit their enthusiasm to the students and adults with whom they work. Through their varied and extensive musical experiences and the love of their art they provide an exciting and unique experience for young people that will not soon be forgotten. I would without reservation recommend "The Amazing Vox" featuring Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg to any school and any student population wanting to experience a truly unique and fun-filled week of operatic exploration.

Dennis Cyphers
Associate Principal
Emilie J. Ross Middle School
7448 Fox Road
Hughson, CA 95326
(209) 883-4425

(Note from Roy Stevens: Mr. Cyphers not only oversaw the project at Ross Middle School, but also enthusiastically took part as a performer, acting as a real role model and inspiration to all the participants.)



STANISLAUS COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

2215 Blue Gum Avenue • Modesto, CA 95358-1097
Phone (209) 525-5400 • Fax (209) 525-4588



Jerry Powers
Chief Probation Officer

May 19, 2004

Mr. Roy Stevens and Ms Anna Lisa Winberg
C/O Mr. Ken Stevens
909 Yale Avenue
Modesto, CA 95350

RE: Performance for the children in Stanislaus County Juvenile Hall

Dear Mr. Stevens and Ms Winberg,

I want to personally thank you for coming into juvenile hall to perform. Your performance was absolutely wonderful. It was remarkable how the two of you were able to engage the children in your performance. Many of our children had never been introduced to Opera. They come into anything that is unknown to them with doubt and apprehension. You were able to work past this and keep their attention and interest.

Your performance not only introduced them to Opera it also allowed them to dream. They were very amazed that you traveled the world doing what you love and that this was your job. They also had the belief that only people who lived in other parts of the world had the talent to perform for a living.

I want to sincerely thank the both of you. You will never know how much your gift of time and talent has touched the children in Stanislaus County Juvenile Hall.

Very truly yours,

Cathy Walke
Juvenile Hall Superintendent
Stanislaus County Probation

Patterson Joint Unified School District

After School Programs

200 N. Seventh Street
Patterson, CA 95363
(209 892- 4795 (209) 495-2392



December 29, 2006

The highlight of our district's After School Program was and is the amazing performance project that was created and designed by Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg. These two wonderful people came into our schools and touched the lives of our students in a profound way. They are wonderful performers and have such a great talent that their true gift is often overshadowed. I believe that their greatest gift is the way they teach and love children. Together they cared for and trained our students in a most remarkable way. They instilled in our students the wonder of musical performance. They touched our students' lives and hearts. I would encourage every school to invite these two remarkable people to be a part of your school and part of the lives of your children. Administrators this is your chance to include the musical arts into your curriculum. Many of Roy and Annalisa's assemblies meet state standards in social sciences and performing arts. Look into the eyes of your students fill their hearts with music. Your school, your parents and your community will be better because your children have experiences the "Amazing Human Voice" as presented by Annalisa Winberg and Roy Stevens.

If you have any questions or need any more information please contact me.

Sincerely,

Dale H. Borman
Coordinator for After School Programs
Patterson Unified School District

Verde Vale Elementary

19415 Jacqueline Street

Anderson, CA 96007

Ph: (530) 378-7040

Fax: (530) 378-6607

At Verde Vale we encourage enthusiasm for lifelong learning

December 14, 2004

Dear Annalisa and Roy:

I wish to extend a big “thanks” for coming to Verde Vale School to do your “Amazing Human Voice” assembly and follow-up workshops. I must admit that I was a bit apprehensive in having you come to our school because none of our students had ever been exposed to opera prior to your visit and I was not sure how they would react to it.

I would guess that you found our population much different than the wealthy, private schools you are used to performing for. Our population is 87% free and reduced lunch. As a principal I want to provide my students with experiences and opportunities that give them a chance to broaden their horizons. There are plenty of assemblies out there to choose from. Some are entertaining and some are informative. Yours was not only entertaining but also very informative.

Although it is a difficult chore to catch and hold our children’s attention, you were able to capture their attention from the moment I introduced you, and also able to hold their attention throughout your entire assembly. I was able to attend both of the workshops* you put on. Both were top notch. I particularly like the way you were able to engage and involve the students in the workshops.

Part of our mission statement here reads as follows: “It is our philosophy at Verde Vale that school is a place where dreams are given direction.” Thanks to your assembly and workshops at our school, students were able to see that anything is possible if they set their minds on it. Through your assembly and workshops “dreams were given direction.”

Thanks again, Annalisa and Roy.

Sincerely,

Fred H. Ehmke/Principal
Verde Vale School
Cascade Union Elementary School District

*K-3 Songs and Rhythm/World Culture, 4th-5th Social Studies workshops

Scio School District 95-C

38875 N.W. First Avenue, Scio, OR 97374

Centennial Elementary School Residency, 19 November 2004

All-school assembly (1st-5th) plus 60 minute long Social Studies classes for 4th and 5th grades

To Whom It May Concern:

I gladly write this letter of appreciation for the very informative and unique assembly provided by Roy Stevens and Annalisa Winberg. 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 their displays, singing in so many languages and stories that included geography lessons. A portion of the assembly was audience participation. The children participated well as they were very interested and our presenters handled the children's high energy skillfully. It was indeed a special treat that our children wouldn't normally experience living as far away as they do from a city that offers this kind of culture on a regular basis. The adults who attended got as much out of the assembly as the children did.

As a culminating activity, Roy and Annalisa offered to conduct Social Studies lessons for our 4th and 5th grade children. The two shared experiences they had in the many different countries they have performed in and gave an international perspective on world history, systems of government and differing cultures. Again the children participated well and got that extra flavor that one gets from listening to someone who has been there.

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

Very sincerely,

Larry Armbrust
Centennial Elementary School Principal, 503-394-3265

Dear Roy and Annalisa!

Thank you for taking the time to visit our out of the way school. The students, teachers, administrators, and parents enjoyed your visit. You were entertaining and educational. The kids laughed often and participated in your group activities. As you saw, many kids walked away imitating your singing style. The Social Studies teachers said they learned from you new ways they could present social studies activities to students that would make their lesson plans more interactive. And the kids lining up for your autographs was a sure sign that they thoroughly enjoyed you your assembly and classes.

Thank you, again, and I look forward to having you again in the future.

Dieter W. Rice
Director of Music, Scio School District