

**M N
O P E R A**

**Youth Performer
Handbook**

25-26 Season

As of 1/4/2026, lb

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➤ WELCOME

Welcome to your role as a youth performer at Minnesota Opera! You are an integral part of our productions this season, and we are happy to have you here! Please review this handbook to familiarize yourself with MNOP's standard operating procedures for main stage productions.

➤ MINNESOTA OPERA DIVERSITY CHARTER

We aim to inspire hope, empower all voices, and strengthen bonds between people of all backgrounds and identities. To this end, Minnesota Opera commits itself to continuously working to become an anti-racist and anti-oppressive organization. We acknowledge that along our journey, our culture and the world around us is constantly evolving. We will inevitably make mistakes. We choose to accept that reality and will humbly begin again in order to lean into this practice. Please review Minnesota Opera's Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, available here: <https://mnopera.org/edi/>.

➤ WHO'S WHO

Director: The stage director is the creative leader of the opera. They work with the design team to develop the concept and visual space for the production. They will instruct you concerning where to go onstage, what is happening dramatically in each moment of the show, and the motivations for the characters you are portraying.

Conductor (Maestro): The conductor is the musical director of the opera, leading the singers and orchestra through the score. The conductor controls the tempi, pacing, interpretation, and expression of the music.

Assistant Director (AD): This person aids the director in creating their vision and may also give you staging directions. The assistant director aids stage management in organizing the performing artists and relaying information to the cast. If you have questions about your staging or motivations, ask the assistant director.

Stage Management: The stage management team leads organization and logistics, ranging from scheduling your rehearsals and costume fittings to setting the stage properly for each scene to telling you when to make your entrances to the stage. Stage management can help you with issues concerning safety, first aid needs, problems backstage, or costume, prop, and set questions.

Production Stage Manager (PSM): The leader of the stage management team. This person is responsible for actor and super casting, scheduling, and may serve as the calling stage manager on some productions (see SM below).

Stage Manager (SM): This person supervises rehearsals and performances to keep them running smoothly and on time. Listen to the stage manager for important announcements, such as your call time for the next rehearsal or performance. When onstage, the stage manager will give you your "places" calls over the PA system, telling you when to proceed backstage to prepare for your entrances.

Assistant Stage Manager (ASM): The individuals (usually there are two) who organize each side of the stage. They help you line up or place you in the proper groups for your entrances, as well as cue you when to go onstage. The ASMs will help you with questions concerning technical aspects of the stage, entrances and exits, safety concerns, and so on. The ASMs may also help relay information from the director or assistant director.

Youth Supervisor: The Youth Supervisor attends all rehearsal and performance calls when youth performers are present and assumes temporary guardianship of youth during their time at the Opera. They are responsible for maintaining discipline and ensuring safety, and oversee youth in the rehearsal rooms, dressing rooms, and backstage areas. The Youth Supervisor helps listen for performer “places” calls to the stage and escorts youth to and from entrances and exits. In the theater, the Youth Supervisor will check youth in and out at the stage door and will wait with youth until a parent or guardian has picked them up at the end of a call.

Intimacy Director: Minnesota Opera employs an Intimacy Director on all productions. In addition to training in consent, sexual harassment, mental health first aid, and protocols to cover a range of situations and acting as a performer advocate, the Intimacy Director is an artist with the skill and choreographic techniques for telling clear, dynamic stories of intimate interactions that help create moving productions for our audience.

Choreographer: The Choreographer creates movement in the piece, which can range from stylized movement choices to dance choreography.

Costume Director: The costume director is responsible for making you look fabulous on stage. The costume director and their staff will be present at your costume fittings and in the theater to make sure that all your costume pieces fit properly and to make any modifications as needed.

Wardrobe Supervisor: The wardrobe supervisor facilitates the work of the wardrobe crew/dressers in the theater.

Wig and Make-Up Designer & Supervisors: The wig and make-up designer and supervisors make sure your hair is dressed appropriately for your role or provide a wig for you to wear. They may also apply theatrical make-up for you or instruct you how to do so.

Super Captain: The Super Captain is a member of the Super cast who is also an experienced performer with Minnesota Opera. Their role is to serve as a guide for all Supers, helping you to understand the process and meet the expectations of Minnesota Opera. The Super Captain can help you find your way around the Opera Center, Ordway Center, or Luminary Arts Center, answer questions, communicate Super needs, questions, or concerns to Stage Management, and help Stage Management provide instruction to Supers during rehearsals or performances.

Key Staff:

Director:	<i>My Name is Florence</i> – Eboni Adams <i>Pagliacci</i> – Brenna Corner & Nora Winsler
Conductor:	<i>My Name is Florence</i> – Mario Antonio Marra <i>Pagliacci</i> - Christopher Franklin
Calling Stage Manager:	<i>Luci Burdick</i>
Assistant Director:	<i>My Name is Florence</i> - Margaret Jumonville <i>Pagliacci</i> – Olivia Gacka
Youth Chorus Director:	Sara Sawyer
Youth Supervisors:	Alicia Storkamp
Chorus Director:	Celeste Johnson
Assistant Stage Managers:	Patty Garvey, Abbey Murray-Stark, Lorna Stephens
Costume Director:	Corinna Bakken
Wardrobe Supervisor:	Molly O’Gara
Hair & Make-Up Designer:	Emma Gustafson
Hair & Make-Up Supervisor:	Alisa Williams
Assistant Production Director, Scheduling:	Sarah Lockwood
Associate Production Director, Props:	Genoveva Castañeda

➤ STAGE TERMINOLOGY

Blocking: Your movement while on the stage

Upstage: Away from the audience

Downstage: Towards the audience

Stage Right/Stage Left: Your right and left, as you are facing the audience

Wings: The partitioned areas immediately offstage where you make your entrances and exits. Wings are usually created with soft black drapes, called **legs**, which serve to hide the offstage areas from the audience. Wings are numbered from downstage to upstage and you will be assigned a specific wing for each entrance and exit.

Sightlines: The cutoff points where the audience stops seeing you. Sightlines will be taped on the floor in the wings; you must always remain behind the sightline until you receive your entrance cue. When exiting, remain in character until you cross offstage of the sightline, as some of the audience can still see you until you pass this point.

House: Normally where the audience sits

Entrance Cues: You will always receive a cue from stage management to go onstage. You will first be given a “stand-by” – which means to get ready and watch for your cue – followed by a “go.” Watch and listen to the ASMs for your cues.

Props: The things you handle onstage, such as a sword or a book, or the furniture that helps create the scene.

Places: Your “places” calls indicate that it is time to get ready for your entrance. When you hear your call over the PA system (or from a stage manager in the rehearsal hall), you should proceed directly to the wings to prepare for your entrance.

Call Time / Next Call: The call time is the time you must report to the rehearsal hall or the theater. You will receive the Daily Schedule via email, which you will need to read for your individual call time.

➤ REHEARSALS

Schedules

When signing your contract as a youth performer, you received an overview schedule of the rehearsals and performances. If you have any conflicts with a scheduled rehearsal, please notify the Assistant Production Director immediately. Conflicts which occur early in the rehearsal process can sometimes be worked around, however, conflicts with onstage rehearsals are almost never approved. In case of an emergency or illness once rehearsals have begun, please notify the Production Stage Manager as soon as possible.

Rehearsal schedules are subject to change. This may mean a change to the overall date or time of the rehearsal, or just a change to the time you are required to report (your “call time”).

Once we move into the theater, all supers and actors will also receive the Daily Schedule for each day via email. This will contain your individual call times for costumes, hair and make-up, etc. Pro tip: use the “find” command (Control + F on a PC or Command + F on a Mac) to search for your last name anywhere it may appear in the schedule.

Location & Parking

All staging rehearsals and costume fittings are held at the Minnesota Opera Center, located at 620 North First Street, Minneapolis, 55401. You will be given a security code which you must enter on the keypad in the entrance vestibule in order to unlock the main entrance door.

Street parking is available in the neighborhood surrounding the Opera Center. After 5:00p and on weekends you may park in Minnesota Opera parking lot across the street from the opera center in any space on the LEFT (odd-numbered) side of the lot OR in spaces #4 through 56 on the RIGHT (even-numbered) side. **You may never park in space #2 or #58 and above, as these spaces are rented 24 hours per day to outside parties. Your car may be towed from these spaces.** Please note that from 8:00a – 5:00p Monday through Friday all spaces in this lot are privately rented, and you may NOT park in the lot during these hours.

Attire

During both rehearsals and performances, you will be working in close proximity with your colleagues. Please avoid the use of perfumes, colognes, or other strongly scented products and attend to matters of basic personal hygiene. For staging rehearsals, dress comfortably in clothes and shoes that allow you to move freely. Wear shoes that are secure on your feet and, preferably, close-toed, so that you can move easily around the stage and your toes will be protected in those big crowd scenes! For costume fittings and rehearsals and performances in costume, be sure to wear proper undergarments. (See “Costume Fittings” section below.)

During Rehearsals

Punctuality and reliability are key qualities of a successful performer, so please be on time. Upon arriving, check in with the Youth Supervisor. Check the callboard outside Bemis Hall for any announcements or notes for youth performers. You will have an assigned mailbox at the base of the stairs on the lower level. Please check your mailbox daily. You will find a nametag in your mailbox; please wear this for all rehearsals and return it to your mailbox for storage at the end of the day.

Stow your personal belongings in the waiting area at the rear of Bemis, where seats will be provided, or in the green room. You are welcome to sit in chairs at the front of Bemis and watch when you are not needed onstage but may be asked to yield these seats to opera administration or principal artists on occasion. We ask that your personal belongings not be kept in the front of the room due to space limitations. Don't forget to silence your cell phone while in the rehearsal hall.

Rehearsals will sometimes involve periods of waiting. We recommend that you bring a quiet activity, such as reading material or homework, to occupy your time when you are not needed onstage. Please keep talking to a minimum during rehearsals, even when you are not onstage. At least one break will be given during each rehearsal. Snacks and beverages in closed containers are welcome.

Costume & Wig Fittings

All of the basic rules for rehearsals also apply to costume fittings. When you are called for a fitting, please:

- Be in the costume shop and ready to try on costumes or wigs at your fitting time. Allow ample time for traffic and parking before your fitting time.
- Silence your cell phone during all costume and wig fittings.
- Wear appropriate undergarments to all costume fittings and performances. This includes full seat underwear and foundation garments such as you will wear onstage. Please refrain from wearing sports bras, thongs, or forgoing undergarments all together. If you have questions about attire for fittings, please contact Corinna Bakken, Costume Director (cbakken@mnopera.org).
- Practice good personal hygiene and refrain from using perfumes, colognes, or other heavily scented products.

If you must reschedule a costume fitting, please give a minimum of 24 hours' notice by contacting the costume shop directly at (612) 342-9576.

Guests

All rehearsals are closed to guests. Parents/Guardians are welcome to wait in the Opera Center Green Room (lounge) on the Lower Level if desired.

Injuries

If you are injured while in the Minnesota Opera Center or at the theater, please report the incident immediately to stage management. The SM staff can provide basic first aid, will summon emergency medical personnel if needed, and will help you complete a First Report of Injury form so that medical treatment can be covered under the Opera's workers' compensation insurance.

Personal Items & Valuables

Artists are responsible at all times for all personal items brought to calls at the Minnesota Opera Center or Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. Minnesota Opera cannot be held liable for the loss or damage of any personal items, regardless of where said loss occurs (including but not limited to rehearsal and performance venues, publicity events, vehicles, personal domiciles, restaurants, and theaters).

In the theater, stage management will collect and lock up small valuables during dress rehearsals. Valuables will not be returned until the end of a rehearsal, so keep any items with you that you will need throughout the call.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Inappropriate Behavior Policy

Minnesota Opera prohibits harassment, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behavior by employees or independent contractors. Any employee or independent contractor found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension without pay or termination of employment. Each artist will be required to read, acknowledge, and abide by the Opera's Discrimination, Harassment, and Inappropriate Behavior policy. Any individual who feels they have been harassed should report the situation to the Stage Manager or the Human Resources Director (jen@mnopera.org or 612-342-9552).

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Minnesota Opera seeks to create a welcoming, nurturing and safe environment for all minors and vulnerable adults with whom it engages. MNOP has zero tolerance for any action of any employee, volunteer, visitor, or independent contractor which may jeopardize the safety, health or innocence of a minor or a vulnerable adult. Any independent contractor who receives a complaint of, or observes, abuse is required to immediately report the complaint to Jen Thill, Human Resources Director (jen@mnopera.org or 612-342-9552) for investigation. If MNOP has determined that abuse has occurred, appropriate action will be taken, including appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and the contacting of law enforcement or other authorities. Each artist will be required to read, acknowledge, and abide by the Opera's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

Electronic Callboard & E-Mail Communications

In order to communicate information and share resources with artists, Minnesota Opera maintains an online callboard: a virtual version of the bulletin board outside the rehearsal room. The electronic callboard is available at <http://callboard.mnopera.org>. All schedule information pertaining to actors and supers, including your overview schedule, daily rehearsal schedules, next calls, and approved releases are posted on this website.

Communications from stage management and the costume department are mostly handled by email. Please be sure that stage management has your current email address on file and check your email regularly throughout the rehearsal and performance process.

Any email communications sent directly to Youth Performers will also be copied to a parent/guardian.

➤ AT THE ORDWAY CENTER**Location & Parking**

Our performance venue is the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, located at 345 Washington Street, St. Paul, 55102. All MNOP Artists must enter and exit via the Stage Door, located at 128 W 5th Street.

Parking is not provided at the Ordway. We recommend that you park in one of the many lots or ramps nearby the Ordway. St. Paul parking meters are enforced daily until 10:00p and most have a 2-hour limit. Due to concurrent events at the Xcel Energy Center and the RiverCentre, there is often a heavy demand for parking in St. Paul. Please check the Daily Schedule feed (via the Electronic Callboard) for notices about heavily impacted parking days and allow plenty of time to find a parking spot and arrive on time for your call at the Ordway; notices regarding traffic and other events will be in the "Notes" section at the top of the Daily Schedule. See the last page of this document for parking ramp suggestions or ask your opera colleagues where they have found parking. Whenever possible, we highly recommend coordinating carpools with your colleague, which your chorus representatives can help facilitate.

Security & Sign In

All artists will be required to sign into and out of the Ordway Center at the Stage Door kiosk using their electronic visitor management system, Envoy. Prior to your first Ordway visit for each production, you will receive an email with instructions from the Assistant Production Director.

Indoor Shoes

If it snows during our rehearsal or performance period, certain hallways and stairwells backstage will be limited to “indoor shoes” only in order to protect costumes from the salt and other chemicals used outdoors in the winter. If we have inclement weather, please bring a pair of indoor shoes or slippers which you can change into upon entering the theater and before going to your dressing room. A shoe changing area with cubbies for shoe or slipper storage will be provided upstage left, immediately upon entering the backstage area of the Music Theater.

Staging Notes

Notes from the stage director or assistant from the last rehearsal or performance will be given in writing and posted on the main callboard and in the youth dressing room. If you have questions about a note, please ask the assistant director or a member of stage management. When possible, staging notes will also be emailed to you.

Safety

The stage can be a dangerous place, with heavy moving scenery and dark spaces. We work very hard to choreograph both backstage and onstage movement to ensure a safe environment. Please pay careful attention to stage management’s instructions backstage and onstage, as part of our job is to keep you safe! If you see a safety hazard, please report it immediately to stage management. You should never come to the stage unless you have been called, including before and after the show and during intermissions, as the crew is often working and moving scenery at these times. Close-toed shoes are required for safety at all onstage rehearsals.

Backstage Etiquette

Please do not touch the audio monitors in the dressing rooms. If your monitor is not working properly or requires an adjustment to the sound level, notify stage management. The Ordway staff is responsible for adjusting monitors as needed.

Costumes

Your costume(s) will be waiting for you in your dressing room. A dresser will be available to assist you with your costume and any questions or problems. Please do not dress in costume before your dresser is present. When you take off your costume, please hang it on the rack and return any accessories to the bags or counter space where you found them.

Please wear your costume as directed, with no changes. This means no personal jewelry, wristwatches, eyeglasses, or nail polish, unless approved by the costume director or costume designer. If you have a problem with a costume piece – a hem is too long, a helmet is blocking your vision, etc. – tell your dresser. They will work with the costume director to correct the problem.

Please do not eat or drink anything (except water) or chew gum while in costume. Many, many hours have gone into the preparation of your garments and they should be kept in excellent condition. While in costumes, wigs, or stage make-up, please do not leave the theater or go into any public areas of the theater.

Hair and Make-Up

You may be asked to wear a wig or to have your own hair specially dressed by the hair and make-up crew. If you are assigned a specific time to report to the wig room to have this done, please be prompt. Only hair and make-up crew may put on or remove your wig for you. Do not attempt to do so yourself, as improper handling of wigs can cause permanent damage. Do not modify your wig or hairstyle once the crew has finished preparing you for the stage.

Depending on your role, you may have stage make up applied by a crew member or you may be given instruction on how to apply make-up yourself. Make-up is applied based on the designer’s and the director’s specifications, so please follow all directions exactly. If specialty make-up is required it will be provided for you. You will generally be expected to provide basic make-up essentials for yourself. You must provide your own cold cream, washcloth, and towel for make-up removal.

Props

The props you carry onstage will be located on shelves or tables backstage right and left, near your entrance location. If you have a question about where to find your prop, ask an assistant stage manager. Please pick up your prop just before your entrance and replace it on a table as soon as you exit. Your prop might be used by someone else later in the opera, so do not take it out of the immediate backstage area.

Photography & Recording

Photography is permitted in the dressing rooms (once everyone is dressed, of course!) and the hallways. Please remember that courtesy dictates asking an individual's permission prior to photographing them. Photography is not permitted backstage or onstage, so please do not bring cameras or phones into the wings. Video and audio recording of any kind are prohibited.

Guests

Guests are not permitted backstage. Parents/guardians will be asked to drop off youth performers at the stage door, where they will be met by a Youth Supervisor.

➤ TICKETS

Youth performers may purchase tickets at a discount on a space available basis. The Patron Services department will determine the nature of the discount to be offered and performance dates at their discretion. Discounted ticket information and purchasing links will be emailed to you by the Assistant Production Director at the beginning of the rehearsal period. Productions sometimes sell out, so we recommend you purchase your tickets early.

We will have a small audience for our two dress rehearsals. A link to reserve a limited number of seats for the Tuesday dress rehearsal will be sent with additional ticketing information at a later date. To reserve seats for the Thursday dress rehearsal, which will include a student audience, please contact Kari Heistad, Creative Development Manager at kheistad@mnopera.org.

➤ CONTACT INFORMATION**Luci Burdick, Production Stage Manager**lburdick@mnopera.org

(612) 342-0233 Office

(937) 504-3389 Cell

Sarah Lockwood, Assistant Production Director (Scheduling)slockwood@mnopera.org

(612) 342-9573

Stage Managementstage_management@mnopera.org**Celeste Marie Johnson, Chorus Director**cjohnson@mnopera.org**Corinna Bakken, Costume Director**cbakken@mnopera.org

(612) 342-9576 Office

Bemis Rehearsal Hall

(612) 342-0238

Electronic Callboard:<http://callboard.mnopera.org>**Box Office**

(612) 333-6669

Hours: 10a – 5p, Monday through Friday

Minnesota Opera Offices

(612) 333-2700 Main Switchboard

Jen Thill, HR Directorjen@mnopera.org

(612) 342-9552

Darius Gillard, VP Impactdgillard@mnopera.org

(612) 342-9555

EDI Feedback Form: <https://mnopera.org/edi/edi-feedback/>

➤ PARKING OPTIONS NEAR THE ORDWAY CENTER

All directions assume that you are approaching downtown St. Paul from the 5th Street exit off of I-94 eastbound. Average fees are listed, but fees may be higher depending on special events occurring in the area.

Traveler's Insurance Company Lot (385 Washington St.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$10 - \$40 flat rate event parking

Surface lot about ½ block from the Ordway stage door. Go straight through the light at 5th Street and 7th Street West. The entrance to the lot is on your left side just past the intersection. Automated kiosks at the entrance accept credit cards only (no cash). There is also an entrance off of W 6th Street.

Kellogg Parking Ramp (129 W. Kellogg Blvd.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$15 - \$40 flat rate event parking

Underground ramp with pedestrian exit next to the front doors of the Ordway. Proceed straight through the light at 5th Street and 7th Street West. Make the next possible right turn onto Washington Street and pass the Ordway. Make the next right onto Kellogg Blvd. The entrance to the ramp is immediately on your right side off of Kellogg.

River Centre Ramp (150 W. Kellogg Blvd.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$10 - \$25 flat rate event parking

Surface lot and underground ramp across Kellogg Blvd. from the Ordway. At the intersection of 5th Street and 7th Street West turn right onto 7th Street West. Make the next left turn onto Kellogg Blvd. The entrance to the ramp is ahead on your right.

Lawson Ramp (11 W. 5th St.) | [Google Map Link](#)

Hourly fee, \$4 - \$28 (up to 24 hours) OR flat event rate depending on events.

Above ground ramp about 2 ½ blocks from the Ordway. Proceed straight through the intersection at 5th Street and 7th Street West. Continue straight ahead through the subsequent intersections at Washington St., Market St., and St. Peter St. The entrance to the ramp is on your left side past St. Peter St., next to the Starbucks.

Smith Avenue Parking Ramp (145 Smith Ave.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$10 - \$25 flat rate event parking

Above ground ramp about 3 blocks from the Ordway. When exiting I-94 eastbound onto 5th Street, make the first right turn onto North Smith Avenue. The ramp entrance is ahead on your right.

Science Museum Ramp (120 W. Kellogg Blvd., enter via Eagle St.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$10 - \$20 flat rate event parking. (closes at 10pm daily, closes at 12am on Ordway performance nights)

Above ground ramp about 1 block from the Ordway. When exiting I-94 eastbound onto 5th street, make the second right turn onto W. 7th St., the next left onto Kellogg Blvd., and an immediate slight right onto Eagle St. Proceed straight through the light at Chestnut St., then follow the signs for a left turn into the Science Museum Ramp.

Treasure Island Center/TRIA Rink Parking Ramp (21 E. 6th Street, enter via 6th St. or Wabasha St.) | [Google Map Link](#)

\$8 - \$15 based on time parked, or flat event rate (depending on date) – Save money via Spot Hero App

Follow I-94 to 10th Street exit (exit 241B). Continue straight on 10th St., then turn right on Cedar and right on 6th St. Turn right into the ramp.

Parking Apps

- SpotHero (<https://spothero.com/>): book in advance for better garage rates and save money by booking multiple days at a time.
- ParkWhiz (<https://www.parkwhiz.com/>): book in advance at lots in the area (often open air).
- Passport (<https://www.passportparking.com/>): use to add money to meters around the Ordway