WNO Opera Institute

This three-week summer intensive brings passionate high school musicians together in the nation’s capital to experience opera in a professional and nurturing environment that only a world-class opera company can provide. Dedicated singers thrive on the Institute’s intense and focused curriculum. Students interested in careers in opera and the performing arts gain skills and knowledge that will help them better navigate their future college and professional choices.

Sing

Multiple performance opportunities and feedback from a variety of professionals will help you develop as a performer. You will be asked to understand and work on all the various skills needed to be a top-level performer: vocal technique, interpretation, presentation, diction, character work, ensemble work, and more.

Develop your singing through:

• Voice Lessons (three individual lessons)
• Coachings
• Master Classes with top professionals

And apply what you’ve learned through our performance opportunities:

• Italian Art Songs Recital: command the stage as a solo performer
• Opera Scenes Recital: show your character work and ability to work in ensemble through the ultimate collaborative art form
• Millennium Stage Concert: perform choral scenes alongside your peers at the Kennedy Center—some students are even invited to classes at a university or conservatory.

Additional Info

What will Institute be like?

The WNO Opera Institute is a challenging pre-professional program that asks you to work hard in a number of academic, artistic, and professional areas. You will be supported by excellent teaching faculty, as well as by staff members and Resident Assistants dedicated to helping you succeed.

What will Institute be like?

The schedule is 9–5 daily, Monday through Friday, with evenings and weekends dedicated to homework, practice, and field trips around the nation’s capital. We expect that, as a pre-professional program, you are coming to prepare to be a professional in the arts. Past students have been invigorated by the opportunity to bring themselves to a new level, and are often amazed at what they are able to achieve in three weeks.

Succeed

Professionals know there are many ways to be successful in opera and the performing arts. They also know that much more than a good voice is needed to succeed, no matter your path.

From the minute you begin to apply to the Institute, you will be able to practice your professionalism and your ability to navigate the various opportunities available to you. Participants at the Institute learn important skills such as how to communicate professionally, be a good colleague, receive personal feedback, and create lasting connections.

Students also have the opportunity to get a better sense of academic and professional life. The curriculum provides opportunities for you to see what attracts you and what does not; examine your strengths and where you can improve; and get insight on how to care for your voice, mind, and body.

While these aspects are embedded throughout the Institute, our career development workshops are also key:

• Alumni Panel
• Breath and the Body
• Characterization
• Choral Artistry
• Career and the Arts Conservatory
• Characterization
• windshield and the Body
• Acting
• Characterization
• Master Class
• Vocal Health

Additionally, we host a college and career session for parents at the end of the program, designed in particular for those families who are unfamiliar with college and career pathways in opera and the arts.

Study

A true intensive, you will get to experience life as a college music major through a rigorous, university-level curriculum including daily assignments, readings, and even research papers. Past participants appreciate the opportunity to learn more about their craft, but also develop skills in time-management, musicianship, and critical thinking in a musical setting prior to their first classes at a university or conservatory.

All students take the following academic courses:

• Acting
• Chorus
• Ear Training and Sight Singing
• Italian Diction
• Opera History
• Ear Training and Sight Singing

A Typical Day

8 a.m.  Breakfast
8:30 a.m.  Workshop
9:30 a.m.  Italian Diction
10 a.m.  Ear Training and Sight Singing
12 noon  Lunch
1 p.m.  Opera History
2 p.m.  Lessons in coachings, mixed with practice and studio time
3:30 p.m.  Meeting
5:30 p.m.  Dinner
6:30 p.m.  Homework and practice time
8 p.m.  Group activity
10:30 p.m.  Lights Out

Program Location

The program is housed on the campus of American University in Washington, D.C. and uses the state of the art Krasno Arts Center for all sessions. Most students stay on campus in the dorms, but you have the option to live at home and commute if you are local.

Room and board fees cover housing for three weeks and flexible spending dollars that can be used toward meals and incidental expenses.

Scholarships

We welcome all students to apply regardless of your personal financial status. Full and partial scholarships are available. See our website for more information.

Additional opportunities

As a WNO Opera Institute student, you will have the opportunity to participate in the Schmidt Youth Vocal Competition held on Sunday, June 23, 2019 via priority registration, a waived registration fee, and the option to check into campus housing early. The competition includes a master class led by the competition’s host judge, Jacqueline Badger Mars. We welcome all students to apply regardless of personal financial status. Full and partial scholarships are available. See our website for more information.

WNO Opera Institute at American University

Washington National Opera
Kennedy Center
2700 F Street, NW
Washington, DC  20566
For more information, please visit wno.org/opera-institute
Celebrating 20 Years!

WNO Opera Institute at American University
A summer intensive for aspiring high school singers

June 24–July 14, 2019
Apply by January 21 at Kennedy-Center.org/OperaInstitute

Auditions!

How to Apply

Audition requirements
All auditioning students must prepare two pieces:
• One Italian art song
• One additional art song in Italian or any other language
See our website for a full list of audition repertoire requirements and information about scheduling a live audition, and contact us with any questions.

Additionally, you will need to submit the following:
• Online application form
• Brief essay
• Letter of recommendation (1)
• Photo (for identification in review only)
• $25 application fee
• Resume (optional)

Accessibility
The Kennedy Center welcomes all applicants. Questions about accessibility or accommodations?
Contact the Office of Accessibility directly at (202) 416-8727 (voice) or access@kennedy-center.org.

All audition and program spaces are wheelchair accessible. We invite accepted students to share their IEP and 504 plans so that we can provide applicable academic support when appropriate.