

GOODMAN RESEARCH GROUP, INC.
Program Evaluation • Consultation • Market Research

***Metropolitan Opera:
HD Live in Schools
2018-19 Season
Final Evaluation Report***

PREPARED BY

Karen C. Gareis, Ph.D.

SUBMITTED TO

Marsha Drummond
Director of Education
The Metropolitan Opera
New York

August 23, 2019

A sample of tag lines created by students to describe their Met Opera *HD Live in Schools* experience to a friend:

- It's super entertaining.
- The operas this season were absolutely amazing, the acting and singing were phenomenal. Trust, not every opera has everyone die.
- The opportunity to see opera live demonstrates how the art form is able to touch the audience in ways other forms might not.
- Experiencing an opera in person is astounding; the music and imagery are glorious to immerse oneself in. The cinematic element made it more accommodating and enjoyable as well.
- Opera seems boring until you actually watch one, then you understand why people like it.
- It was amazing and breathtaking. I would go every weekend if I could.
- I have been to see several live operas, but it was interesting to see it on a screen. I liked that you could really see the performers' facial expressions as they sang, and I enjoyed the backstage views.
- I would describe the opera as a whole new world, because you get to experience in a fun way the history or a tale that's being told, it has music 🎵 [and] incredible sets that really make you understand everything better.
- I would tell my friend that opera is not boring, despite the running joke that it is — quite a few of the stories are very interesting.
- I've learned to love every detail of operas and theater. In each opera I've either loved the music, set, or costumes for every opera I've seen.
- I've been opened up to a new type of show/entertainment to watch and it has allowed me to appreciate classical music.
- It's litttt.
- My experience was interesting because I had the idea opera was just Viking hats. It's totally not.
- OMG this opera was amazing!
- Opera is a really engaging experience. You can feel all of the passion, and all of the actors, costumes, sets, and stories are amazing.
- Opera is not just people shouting songs. If you carefully listen, it tells a story and touches your soul
- Operas give you a new perspective to music, drama, costume design and audience experience. It makes you fall in love with what you do artistically (music, art) in the "big screen" — [it] is really inspiring and motivating as an artist.
- The costumes, music, and stories were all a great thing to experience. Before honors choir got me interested I hadn't had one thought about opera, now I am very interested. I'm still not an expert opera watcher but I'm looking forward to learning more about opera.
- The Met Opera is so beautiful — colorful, full of drama, and the music is just entrancing.
- This is an amazing and fun program where I learned a lot about culture and how these stories relate to history. I have always wanted to see operas and they are even better than I thought they would be.
- Yo it was magical.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2018-19 was the 12th season of the Metropolitan (Met) Opera's *HD Live in Schools* program, an initiative developed to make opera more accessible to students as an educational and entertaining art form. Goodman Research Group, Inc. (GRG) conducted an external evaluation of the program, including online surveys of 865 students in grades 4-12 before they participated in the season and of 1,158 of those after their last *HD Live in Schools* experience. GRG also surveyed 45 teachers at the end of the season.

FINDINGS

- **Students learned from *HD Live in Schools*.** Participating students learned about opera and its political, historical, and cultural relevance, as well as making broader gains in knowledge about music, about history and culture, and about literature and rhetoric.
- **Students were extremely engaged by the opera broadcasts, and their attitudes toward opera improved.** They greatly enjoyed the opera broadcasts, especially the performers, performances, music, and stage sets. Their attitudes about opera improved, and they were more likely to find opera relatable, understandable, and interesting after participating than before.
- **About half the students are at least *somewhat likely* to be involved with opera in some way in the immediate future,** including discussing various aspects of an opera, listening to or watching video of an opera, and attending a *Live in HD* broadcast. This was especially true for students who enjoyed the broadcasts and found the classroom activities helpful in understanding opera.
- ***HD Live in Schools* has a very broad reach nationally to students of a wide variety of ages, and reach to some underserved audiences is excellent. Reach to non-arts students and boys could be improved.** The program shows evidence of remarkable reach to students from groups historically underrepresented in arts patronage, and has continued to expand its reach to students younger than high school age over the years. However, students already enrolled in arts courses and, to a lesser degree, girls are more likely to be exposed to the program.
- **Students give a thumbs up to the *HD Live in Schools* program.** Almost three-quarters described their experiences positively. They also found the classroom activities effective in helping them get the most out of their opera experience. Students who rated the activities highest were also more likely to say they would continue their opera involvement in the near future.
- **Teachers gave rave reviews to the *HD Live in Schools* program.** They were very impressed with the Educator Guide activities, the Educator Conference and professional development, the Google Hangouts, and the program's effect on their students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Continue bringing *HD Live in Schools* to new markets.** The program is very successful and works well; teachers and students agreed that more students deserve to experience the unique and powerful opportunity that it offers.
- **Continue expanding the reach of *HD Live in Schools* to non-arts students.** Because the program is primarily used in music and choir courses, it tends to reach students who are already interested in the arts. The program is also very suitable for use in core courses, and GRG notes that expanding participation in those other courses represents an opportunity to reach new audiences of students who have not already shown an interest in the arts.
- **Broaden access to Google Hangouts and other interactive activities.** The Google Hangouts are an especially valuable component of the *HD Live in Schools* experience. GRG recommends involving more classrooms in each hangout and, given the challenges of scheduling these, considering adding asynchronous opportunities for students to interact with performers and backstage craftspeople.
- **Continue to address the needs of younger students.** Increasing numbers of elementary-aged students are participating in *HD Live in Schools*. As in prior years, GRG recommends offering a range of operas and classroom activities that are suitable for these younger students, who likely require additional scaffolding to make the most of their opera experiences as compared with older students.