

Putting It All Together

Or

It Takes a Bunch of People to Put on an Opera

Some of the people needed to put on an opera are pretty obvious:

The **COMPOSER** – who writes the music

The **LIBRETTIST** – who writes the words

The **SINGERS** - the *Principals* (they sing the lead roles)

- the *Comprimario* (they sing the minor or secondary roles)

- the *Chorus/Ensemble* (a group of singers who all sing together)

The **ORCHESTRA** – a group of musicians who, with their instruments, provide both the accompaniment for the voices and a continuous musical sound used by the composer to express whatever he or she wants to convey at any given point in the opera



The **CONDUCTOR** – who leads the orchestra and tell the singers when to sing. He or she does a lot more too. The conductor is the one who decides how to interpret what the composer wrote.

But it takes a lot more than singers and musicians to put on an opera. Some of the people concerned with the artistic direction of the opera are:



The **CHORUS MASTER** – who trains the chorus so that they will know the words and the music and how they are expected to perform.

The **CHOREOGRAPHER** – who creates the dances

The **STAGE DIRECTOR** – who directs the movement and action on the stage

The **DESIGNERS** – who develop the plans for the sets, the lights, and the

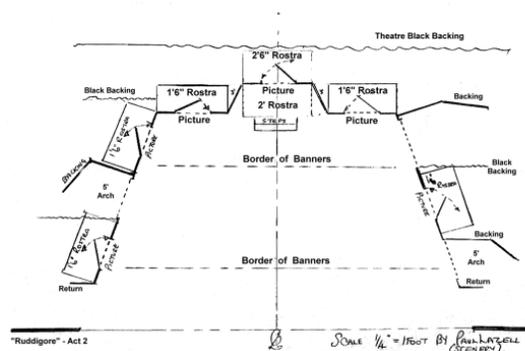
costumes

The people who take these ideas and turn them into reality include:

The **PRODUCTION MANAGER** – who deals with the scheduling, including rehearsal times, and arrivals of people, sets, and costumes. He or she is the one who coordinates the activities of all the people working to put on the opera.

The **STAGE MANAGER** – who, during the performance, dictates when things happen (when the curtain goes up, when people enter and when lights and scenery change)

The **TECHNICAL DIRECTOR** – who is in charge of the building, loading and shifting of the scenery and the props, hanging and focusing lights and generally carrying out the designers' ideas



They are assisted by: carpenters, electricians, lighting technicians, wardrobe people, wig makers, and make-up artists.

These artists and craftspersons are supported by the Administrative staff, who decides on the operas presented, raise money for new productions, publicize the season, market tickets to performances, introduce new audiences to opera, and manage the company's funds and day-to-day operation.

Then there are those non-singing, non-speaking, non-dancing people who appear on stage carrying the spears or the trays or just swelling the crowds. They are called **supernumeraries** (or **supers** for short).

Finally, there is the **AUDIENCE**, without whom there would be no reason to put on the opera in the first place.

