

The Nightingale

A Full-Length Youth Opera in One Act

This youth opera for families is adapted from Hans Christian Anderson's 1844 fairy tale. *The Nightingale* opera speaks about the power of song and nature. It's also a lesson in friendship, understanding, and forgiveness. In a digital world that demands our time and attention, this opera reminds us that we should take time to connect to the beauty of the natural world.

Creative Team:

Music by John Young, Libretto by Alan Olejniczak, Dramaturgy by George Hemcher

Synopsis:

Children gather in the garden near the Emperor's palace, this is where they "wonder, laugh, and play". The Kitchen Girl and The Fisherman enter and sing about the wonderful song of the Nightingale. The Emperor overhears them and demands the Nightingale be brought before him to sing. The Court and the children set out into the forest to find the Nightingale. They remark, that while the bird is plain and gray, "the Nightingale's song is best of all!" Indeed, the Emperor who is so delighted, he is moved to tears. The Emperor insists that the bird must stay and never leave him. The Nightingale has now become a prisoner of the palace. The poor Nightingale, who longs for the forest, is now too upset to sing. The Courtiers mock the unfortunate bird but they are quickly distracted when the Emperor is presented with the Mechanical Nightinbird. This golden bird is bejeweled and sings whenever you wish. While the Emperor and his court are distracted with the new toy, the children rescue the real Nightingale who returns to the forest. Time passes and the members of the court have become bored of the Mechanical Nightinbird lamenting it only plays one song. The Emperor is distraught and misses the real Nightingale. The Chamberlain attempts to cheer the Emperor by playing the song from the Mechanical Nightinbird only to find it's broken and cannot be mended. The Emperor and the Court agree they mistreated the Nightingale and are sorry for their unkindness. To their surprise the Nightingale returns to the palace to forgive them all. Everyone is thankful and rejoices. They all agree the Nightingale belongs in the forest and they must visit her to hear her wonderful songs. "There we'll wait for nature's call. The Nightingales songs are best of all." The Emperor reminds the audience that nature is a gift. "Take time for yourself and enjoy the living world! Go out and explore. Open your imagination and discover nature's beauty."

Duration: 75 minutes **Style of Music:** Neo-Romantic

Language: English

Casting:

Roles for Adults (2): NIGHTINGALE (Soprano), EMPEROR (Baritone)

Roles for Young Singers (10): KITCHEN GIRL, FISHERMAN, CHAMBERLAIN, VICEROY, CHANCELLOR, COURTIER ONE, COURTIER TWO, COURTIER THREE, MECHANICAL NIGHTINBIRD, WATCHMAKER, Children's Chorus *mixed with ten individual lines.*

Instrumentation for Twelve: Two Violins, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Piano, Flute/Piccolo, Bb Clarinet, Bassoon, Trumpet, French Horn, and Percussion.

Current Development: Libretto completed with full vocal and instrumentation to be completed around December, 2020