

VICTORIAN OPERA



Il Mago di Oz

Education Resource



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About this resource

This resource is designed for school students in Years 7-12. Activities can be used in the classroom alongside or separate to Victorian Opera's production of *Il Mago di Oz*.

The activities provided in this resource align with the following Victorian Curriculum Learning Areas:

- The Arts – Music, Drama and Visual Arts
- English

The table below outlines how the activities designed around each Learning Area align to the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities.

CAPABILITIES	Literacy	Numeracy	ICT	Critical and Creative Thinking	Personal and Social	Ethical Understanding	Intercultural Understanding
Music							
Activity 1	✓		✓	✓			✓
Activity 2	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Activity 3	✓	✓		✓			
Activity 4	✓		✓	✓			
Visual Arts & Design							
Activity 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Activity 2	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Activity 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Activity 4	✓			✓	✓		
English							
Activity 1	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Activity 2	✓			✓	✓		✓
Activity 3	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



About the Work

Synopsis

Dorothy grows up in Kansas with her uncle and aunt. Her adventures begin the moment a dangerous tornado sweeps over the farm and carries off the house, together with Dorothy and her dog Toto, to the far-off land of the Munchkins. The house falls onto the Wicked Witch of the East, of all people, thus triggering a series of fantastical events. Admittedly, the Wicked Witch of the East's red shoes lend Dorothy magical powers, but she also has to pass the most gruelling of tests. But Dorothy is not alone: on her journey, she encounters a scarecrow whose dearest wish is to be given a real brain rather than merely having a head full of straw. The pair also encounters a rusty tin man who would like to have a heart. Another travelling companion is a lion, who has a powerful roar, but otherwise believes he is very cowardly. Together, they set off to find the mysterious Wizard of Oz in the Emerald City, who is supposed to help Dorothy find her way home. They are repeatedly threatened by the Wicked Witch of the West, and even the powerful Wizard of Oz ultimately turns out to be a fraud: his spells have no effect. But time and again, the travelling quartet, including the little dog, prove that they have kind hearts, intelligence and courage, and ultimately survive all their adventures with bravura.

- Opernhaus Zürich

About this production

Pierangelo Valtinoni's *Il Mago di Oz* is written for an age group of younger performers, which suited the cast Victorian Opera wanted to work with in its newly established Emerging Artists Program.

Victorian Opera's production will feature a cast of sixty-two singers, made up of emerging singers in both principal and chorus roles, and a children's chorus. In addition, the orchestra is a small chamber ensemble of twenty musicians that will perform on stage amongst the action of the show. This, plus the quick change between vastly different locations throughout the work, will see the stage space set up in the shape of an upside-down 'U', formed from a series of raised platforms. The orchestra will be placed inside the 'U' and the singers will use the space out the front of the stage and on the raised platforms.

Many of the scenes in the original book by L. Frank Baum have been excluded from this operatic production, as Valtinoni has instead incorporated the scenes which best support the public perception of the work. Some other differences will be included, such as the red ruby slippers made famous in the renowned film with Judy Garland. In the original book the slippers are silver, and that is what they will be in Victorian Opera's production of *Il Mago di Oz*. In addition, Dorothy's dog Toto is black in the original book but tan-coloured in the film version. The film, being so iconic and well-known, will have left a strong portrayal in the mind of most audiences, and as a result there are several elements to contend with in Victorian Opera's production. These include a stronger correlation with L. Frank Baum's original book, rather than the film, and also that the work is performed in Italian.

One of the main themes explored in *Il Mago di Oz* is being self-sufficient, resilient and being able to solve your own problems. Other themes include the symbolic nature of the journey and what can be discovered along the way, how one tackles any obstacles and problems they come up against in the journey and the importance of the lesson learned. Finally, there is a strong theme of friendship in how the characters who Dorothy meets along the way are looking for an answer to their individual problems, while being supported by the friendships they form on their journey.

Creative Team

Composer

Pierangelo Valtinoni

Libretto

Paolo Madron

Based on

Lyman Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*



Chad Kelly
Conductor



Constantine Costi
Director



Mel Serjeant
Costume Designer



Daniel Gosling
Lighting and
Projection Designer

Characters and cast



Georgia Wilkinson
Dorothy



Michael Dimovski
The Scarecrow



Stephen Marsh
The Tin Man



James Emerson
The Cowardly Lion



Amelia Wawrzon
The Good Witch of
the North



Kate Amos
The Good Witch of
the South



Teresa Ingrilli
The Queen of the
Field Mice



Shakira Dugan
The Wicked Witch of
the West



Tiernan Maclaren
The Wizard of Oz /
The Guardian of the Gates

Chorus

Victorian Opera Chorus
People of the Emerald City

Victorian Opera Children's Chorus
Munchkins and Field Mice

Orchestra

Victorian Opera Youth
Orchestra
with
Victorian Opera Chamber
Orchestra

The Arts – Music

What is opera?

Opera as a European art form has been in existence since the 1600s, and became especially popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today there are many styles of opera performance, but they all have one thing in common – an opera is a play that is sung.

The predominant languages of opera are Italian, French, German and English.

The main difference between opera and music theatre is amplification: music theatre is usually amplified while opera is not. In addition, music theatre usually includes spoken dialogue as well as music and dance. Opera, on the other hand, uses recitative – a singing style designed to imitate natural speech.

Where did opera come from?

The origin of opera can be traced back to the Ancient Greeks, who lived over 2000 years ago. The advances in society that this sophisticated civilisation developed included the invention of a city-state (*polis*) resulting in a golden age of culture, music, art, poetry and drama, including beautiful sculpture, remarkable architecture and the creation of classical poetry such as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer. Ancient Greece had a profound influence on the discovery and advancement of science, physics, maths, astronomy and geometry, producing the influential philosophers Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, who approached the big questions of life often in a genuine scientific way, daring to question and challenge traditional conventions and prejudices of their age. The Ancient Greeks also loved the theatre, with playwrights including Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides writing enduring works that informed the future dramatic structures of playwriting.

In the following thousand years, much of the knowledge and skills established by the Ancient Greeks were lost, particularly in the sciences and arts. For example, the art in what we refer to the Middle Ages had lost some of the scientific application that had made Greek art and sculpture so lifelike. From about the 1300s, Italian scholars set out to rediscover many of the Ancient Greeks' innovations. This period was called the Renaissance, which translates literally as 'rebirth'. Founded in Florence, it marked a period of enlightenment and the rediscovery and study of culture, philosophy, art, architecture and science. During this era, highly influential artists contributed a vast wealth of knowledge. Some of which include musicians, philosophers, writers and mathematicians such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli, Raphael, Donatello, Galileo, Shakespeare, Erasmus and Copernicus. One art form the Renaissance scholars were particularly interested in was Greek theatre. The texts had survived time, but the performance practice indications had been lost. Scholars knew from writings by philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato that the plays were accompanied by music, and that this helped raise the emotional impact of the works. But how? What did the music do? How were the lines sung?

The Florentine Camerata, a group of thinkers and musicians from Florence, met regularly to determine how the musical accompaniment might have sounded and supported the text. They invented a new art form in which the dialogue in a play would be sung. They decided to call the new art form 'Opera', which simply meant 'a work'. The first truly successful opera was called *L'Orfeo*. It was composed by Claudio Monteverdi and is still performed today.

Following the great success of this work, opera became popular all over Europe and then the world. The style of opera, and the way it was performed, developed over the centuries to reflect the culture of the time. At its height in the 1800s, opera was performed regularly in theatres in every major city.

Voice types and singing styles

There are seven voice types in opera, each of which is defined by the range of notes they can sing and their vocal quality.

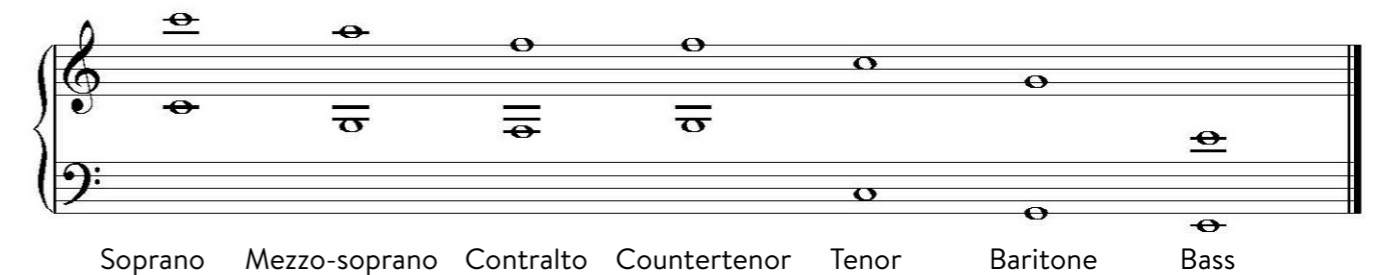
There are three female operatic voice types, although most operas only have soprano and mezzo-soprano roles.

- Soprano – the highest sounding female voice, with a vocal range from middle C up to the C two octaves above.
- Mezzo-soprano – slightly lower than the soprano, with a vocal range from the G below middle C to the A two octaves above.
- Contralto – the lowest sounding female voice and rarely used in opera today. The vocal range for this voice type is from the F below middle C to a high F one octave above.

There are four male voice types, although the countertenor voice is mainly used in operas from the Baroque period (1600-1750).

- Countertenor – the highest sounding male voice, with almost the same vocal range as a mezzo-soprano; the G below middle C to a high F one octave above.
- Tenor – a high sounding male voice, that usually takes the leading male role. The vocal range for this type is roughly from the C below middle C to the C above.
- Baritone – the middle sounding male voice with a vocal range from the second G below middle C up to the G above.
- Bass – the lowest sounding male voice, which has a vocal range from the E above middle C to the E two octaves below; however, some bass singers can sing lower.

This diagram illustrates where each voice type sits on a music stave.



There are further categories of voice, defining the kind of voice quality and the type of music they can sing. The composer will consider voice types to highlight the different characters – for example, to differentiate between a King and a Servant, or a Princess and a Witch.

A few of these are:

- Coloratura – a very high range with the ability to sing complicated parts with agility
- Dramatic – a heavy sounding, powerful voice
- Lyric – an average sized voice with the ability to sing long, beautiful phrases
- Heldentenor – the 'heroic tenor', a very big role that requires a powerful sound

Follow the links below to hear examples of what these voices sound like:

Classical female voices – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIPFAww8X-U>

Classical male voices – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRL7shs23Wc>

About Pierangelo Valtinoni

Pierangelo Valtinoni studied organ and organ composition, choral music and choir conducting, composition and orchestra conducting. As an organist he has performed in Italy and abroad. As the conductor of the Paralleli Ensemble and the Icarus Ensemble, he has given numerous concerts in Europe and Mexico. His compositions are recorded for various labels, broadcast by Italian and foreign national broadcasters and published by various publishing houses including Boosey & Hawkes and Carus Verlag. In particular, the operas *Pinocchio*, *The Snow Queen* and *The Wizard of Oz* and *Alice in Wonderland*, written with the librettist Paolo Madron, are among the most represented contemporary works in the world (Latin America, Austria, China, Korea, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States).

In 2006 he won the prize for best musical commentary at the 60th National Festival of Dramatic Art in Pesaro. In 2014 he received the ASAC Award for Choral Music. In 2017 he was nominated *Accademico Olimpico* by the Accademia Olimpica of Vicenza. In 2019 he was awarded the mention of *Cittadino Benemerito* by the Municipality of Montecchio Maggiore, his hometown.

Since 2020 he has been a member of the Artistic Commission of the Feniarco. His activity as a composer of operas has been the subject of three different theses. He holds lectures and seminars on analysis, orchestration and composition. He teaches at the Conservatory of Vicenza.



Image 1: Pierangelo Valtinoni



Interview with the composer

What drew you to adapting *The Wizard of Oz* as an opera?

It was a suggestion that came from my friend and Head Promoter of Boosey & Hawkes in Berlin, Frank Harders, and the Zurich Opernhaus who commissioned it from me. I accepted this suggestion, set about rereading Lyman Frank Baum's book and studying everything that this beautiful American fairy tale with its profound contents generated, including the famous film/musical starring Judy Garland as Dorothy.

The Wizard of Oz, in fact, is a Dorothy's oneiric intimate journey that she carries out with the company of three emblematical characters, who symbolise certain feelings (brain, heart and bravery) which are, unbeknownst to her, part of her own personality. This is what the journey is meant for: making Dorothy aware of having them in herself. In this sense, the journey to Emerald City is the journey of initiation.

At the end of the trip, Dorothy comes back to Kansas to face her real life with full maturity. The Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and The Cowardly Lion are real characters that symbolise the feelings that Dorothy has finally discovered in herself.

There is another meaning about her return. It is not nostalgia for a world made of poverty and hardships typical of the American society of the end of the nineteenth century, but rather the sense of responsibility of the destiny of the people, especially her beloved aunt and uncle who replace the missing parents.

During the development of the Opera, each character realises they already possess what they would like to ask the Wizard: the Cowardly Lion demonstrates his bravery when he builds a bridge out of himself to allow his friends to go from one side of the cliff to the other; the Scarecrow demonstrates his intelligence realising for the first time the Tin Woodman and him, "not being made of flesh", can save Dorothy and the Lion being immune to the soporific effect of poisonous poppies; the Tin Woodman demonstrates he has a heart because, with compassion, he frees the Mouse Queen from the death trap.

There are so many adaptations of these brilliant stories. What sort of influence, if any, did other adaptations have on yours?

I have listened to and seen many adaptations on the subject, but I have tried to find my own personal key, trying not to be influenced by other types of realisation. Basically, what I try to do is to continue the European operatic tradition, especially the Italian one.

The sound world of this piece is incredibly colourful and whimsical. It wanders through many colours and styles. Tell us about your approach to capturing this world in sound.

I have always listened with the same attention to any musical genre and style, sorting it exclusively by degree of complexity and not by social origin. As a boy, I loved both so-called "cultured music", which I studied at the Conservatory, as well as folk music and popular music, especially progressive rock. I think that in my musical language all these influences have found their place, giving rise to what you describe as a sound world "incredibly colourful and whimsical". Of course, everything is kept in balance by the use of a strict compositional system that is rooted in the tonal system but uses it in a personal way.

This will be the Australian premiere of this work. Tell us about your relationship with Australia, and have you had works performed here before?

I know very little about Australia, and that little I have learned from the books I have read and the films I have seen. What really attracts me is the beauty of nature, especially the colours. Of course, I am also fascinated by the big cities like Sydney and Melbourne. As for the second part of the question, I think it is the first time that a work of such large proportions as *The Wizard of Oz* has been performed on this continent. I am indeed very much happy about that.

Can you name some musical influences on this work?

I could recommend, from the point of view of the use of rhythm, some music by Igor Stravinsky, such as the opera/suite *L'Histoire du Soldat*; or, from the point of view of melodic and harmonic variety and the use of dance rhythms, some compositions by Leonard Bernstein, such as the musical *West Side Story* or the opera *Candide*.

We’re incredibly excited to be performing this work with many of Victoria’s finest young performers. Tell us about your approach to writing music for young people to perform and how it may change or inform your decision making.

I too am very excited about this premiere.

The Wizard of Oz is an opera for children, but not only for children. In fact, there is not a big difference between composing music for a young or an adult audience because, in both cases, the composer must be able to connect with the listener in order to communicate an emotion to them, and therefore, in addition to having something to say, he or she must possess the necessary technique to do so.

When the audience consists of children, however, one must also take into account that their attention span is shorter than that of adults. A child needs constant stimulation to keep his or her concentration, whereas an adult can also afford to be bored. Hence, paying attention to narrative tension, resorting to continuous stratagems to keep it from dropping, becomes strategically crucial when dealing with young audiences.

Through your various collaborations with writer and journalist Paolo Madron, you’ve explored musical settings of some of the world’s most beloved stories. Tell us about your working relationship, and how you go about creating such fun and rich worlds in your work.

Generally, after deciding on the subject of a work, we sit down to discuss what we want to tell through words and music. For *The Wizard of Oz*, for example, we decided that the reason Dorothy travels all the way to the Emerald City to meet Oz is to find the intelligence, heart, and courage, feelings that will be indispensable for her to help her aunt and uncle, to whom she owes everything, when she returns to Kansas. Once the contents have been established, I begin to write an initial script, which I then discuss with the librettist and the editor. Once the script is agreed upon, I try to define the nature/personality of each character and ask the librettist to start writing the libretto, perhaps recommending a particular verse metric. Then everything becomes easier because the suggestions of the written music influence the librettist by telling them how to proceed, while the rhythm of the words, conversely, suggests me how to develop the musical structure.

What is your involvement with Victorian Opera?

A few years ago, I received an unexpected phone call from the former Superintendent of the Teatro Regio di Torino, William Graziosi, who introduced me to someone. This person was Richard Mills who, in Italian, complimented me because he had seen my opera *Pinocchio* and was enthusiastic about it. He also told me that he wanted to take the opera to Australia.

Then, last year, he wrote to me he had planned to perform another opera of mine, *The Wizard of Oz*, at Victorian Opera, and that he wanted to perform it in the original language, that is in Italian. I was indeed very surprised and honoured.

Name some of your favourite operas.

There are many, so I can only mention a few of the most famous: *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi, *La Bohème* by Giacomo Puccini, *Death in Venice* by Benjamin Britten....

You’re taking your friend to the opera for the first time. What opera do you taken them to and why?

I would probably take them to see Giacomo Puccini’s *La Bohème*, because I would be sure that they would eventually be moved and start to love this genre of music.

As a composer, how do you structure your day to write such wonderful music?

When I am not busy teaching at the Conservatory, I get up early in the morning and start writing. I generally reserve the afternoon to revise what I wrote in the morning and then proceed to the orchestration.

What is your favourite snack to have at an interval of an opera?

If there’s a good glass of Prosecco I’m more than happy to drink it, perhaps accompanied by some canapés, and then discuss with friends the opera that’s being performed.

Orchestration

The orchestra for *Il Mago di Oz* consists of twenty musicians and is made up of the instruments listed below.

Some of the musicians in the woodwind family are required to play a number of other instruments throughout the performance. For example, the flute player will also be playing the piccolo.

Instrumental family	Instrument
Woodwind	Flute Piccolo Oboe Clarinet Bassoon
Brass	French Horn Trumpet
Strings	Violin Viola Cello Double bass Harp
Keyboard	Piano Celeste Accordion
Percussion	Timpani Glockenspiel Xylophone Cowbell Snare drum Crot Gong Bass drum Hi-hat Suspended cymbal Bells Triangle Woodblock T. bells Claves Clapper Thunder sheet Wind chime Metal pieces



Do some research on the composer Pierangelo Valtinoni and write a short essay on his work, considering the following:

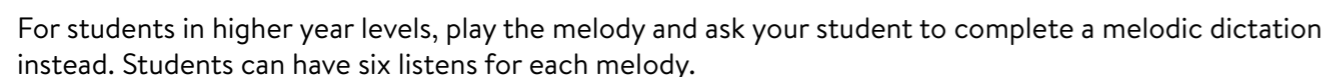
- ## Activity two: Learn about opera

Choose one of the below topics on opera and write a 1000-word essay. You must reference at least five different sources.

- ### Activity three: Melodic dictation (guided by teacher)

Clap the below rhythms from the piano vocal score of *Il Mago di Oz* to your students and ask them to transcribe the rhythm onto some manuscript. Students can have four listens for each rhythm.

Rhythm 1



Use the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's Learn app to explore the sounds made by the different orchestral instruments in the orchestra for *Il Mago di Oz*.

The list of instruments can be found on page 11 of this resource. MSO Learn is available at <https://www.msoschool.com.au/>.

Find the instruments used in the orchestra for *Il Mago di Oz* on the picture below and draw a circle around them.





Interview with the Costume Designer, Mel Serjeant

Can you tell us a little bit about the design concept for this production of *Il Mago di Oz*?

When we sat down originally, we had to think about the facts that existed before we could even think about the design. For example, we have a huge chorus of adults and a huge chorus of children in this production who all need to be costumed; we have an orchestra on stage; we have a set budget we're working with for each department; and then, the timeframe to build it all in, set and costumes, and how to work all that in. I'm not quite sure whether it was Dan [Gosling, Lighting and Production Designer] or Elizabeth [Hill-Cooper, original director] who came up with the idea for the projection, but basically, the idea is to project the scenery rather than having a set. In order to project it, the cast need to be in white and the set needs to be a white background and a white floor. Hence, the children and the chorus will be dressed in all white so that the projections of Emerald City and Munchkin Land are projected onto the white clothing they'll be wearing.

The next fact became, how do we dress that number of children and adult chorus members in white? We have to start purchasing those things before we even see them for fittings, and therefore it needs to be of a contemporary style because of the large amount of clothing required. Knowing that the children's and adult chorus will be in contemporary clothing meant that the lead characters and their costumes need to gel together with that in some way, but also be able to be identified as those characters because of how iconic they are as the Scarecrow and Dorothy, etcetera. All of the principal characters have a look that the audience will almost expect to see, so I will pay homage to the original designs for those lead characters but bring a more contemporary look to the rest of the production. The principal character costumes will have a Wild West feel about them. Our Glinda, for example, isn't so fairy godmother and almost all the witches are very similar to one another in their costumes – it's more the colour of their costume, that denotes their character. Their hats, for example, are almost like a strange cowboy hat come witch's hat in a sense.

Does the libretto or music inform your designs in any way? If so, how?

Yeah, definitely. Before I started doing any pen to paper or Apple Pencil to iPad, I read the libretto, identifying if there are any things in it that are mentioned which need to be in the show or part of the costume. For example, in the libretto, the characters talk about Dorothy's white shoes, so her shoes need to be white. We're actually going to add some redness into the shoes because it's so iconic that her shoes are red in the film, which a lot of people have seen, so the audience will expect that Dorothy has these ruby red slippers. Actually in the book, the slippers weren't red. I think it was because when technicolour came out, they wanted to make most of the MGM when they made the film, that's why her shoes actually became red because they wanted to use that advancement in their technology. Also, when I did start sketching, I had the music playing in the background as well.

But yeah, you definitely need to read the libretto so you know what's happening and who the characters are, what they're all about and what they do, and it does influence what they will be wearing.

Do you have any memories of this work personally?

Yes. I'm always surprised with people of my generation that haven't seen it or don't even know of *The Wizard of Oz*. I can't even tell you how many times I've seen the film as a child. It just always brought the family together. It's like a family film and a little bit of an adventure film, even though it's a musical.

You've talked about how iconic this work is. Is that a challenge as the costume designer of a new production of it to come up with a fresh design? Or does what's come before influence your designs to a degree?

It absolutely has influenced my designs. I found it quite tricky to ignore what's already in my head that I've seen so much of and like I said earlier, the audience also expect to be able to go that's the Lion, and that's the Tin Man. You want to be able to also bring those elements of what the audience is expecting, while putting a different spin on it. Like I said, I've made it a little bit more contemporary, though it is certainly still not contemporary. You wouldn't see anyone walking down the street in anything that's going to be on stage, but it just has a little bit of a contemporary edge to it.

I would say the easiest costume for me to design in this production, and the one I found the most fun, would be the Queen of the Field Mice because I had no previous image of that character in my head as she's not featured in the film. She's become a character based on how I imagined her, whereas there is information out there of who the other characters are. I've worked on two musical productions of *The Wizard of Oz* as well as *Wicked*, so I've got a lot of the imagery of what's been seen before in my mind. Even though both of the different versions of *The Wizard of Oz* I worked on had fresh designs, it was still very easy to tell who was who, and there definitely always seemed to be that correlation back to the original film.

Are the costumes for the principles being made from scratch?

For the most part, yes, the principal costumes are all being made from scratch. Things like the Wizard's fob watch have been purchased from a vintage store and there will be certain things that we purchase, like the eyeglasses that are the green glasses when they go to Oz. They'll be purchased and maybe adapted to have the lenses changed to green. But even the things that we purchase will still need some kind of art finishing or adapting to them. We'll have a team of milliners, makers and cutters and art finishers on board.

Some fabrics, like the fabric for the Tin Man, we will make ourselves from scratch as well as the costume, so we don't copy how the Tin Man has been done before. In our version, the idea is that the bodysuit of it, the top half of its torso, will be made out of felting rather than being a tin cylinder, but will give it a similar shape. To do that, you start with wool woving, which is all hand filtered together to create the fabric first.

What sort of fabric will you use for the Scarecrow?

The Scarecrow is in denim overalls so we'll use some overalls, which we have a few to choose from, and then art finish them and have like a raffia braid, so like a straw-type braid, rather than just using straw and shoving it in there because that will end up falling out. You know you can buy things that are pre-made trims and things that we will use. I'm hoping to find some hessian feed bags to make his shirt out of, to really give him that sort of hobbled together kind of farm look, as well as an old ratty sort of hat, with maybe a sunflower on it and pieced together with bits and pieces. So really, the Scarecrow will be some bits of purchased vintage and then remade, rather than from scratch; we're not going to sew his overalls. But then other costumes, like the Lion, are going to be mostly completely made from scratch, as well as the Witches.

The lighting, as you mentioned, is going to project images onto the costumes of the chorus members. Is that something you need to consider for these costumes, in regards to material choice in particular?

Yeah, it's difficult because we are purchasing all those costumes so they'll be either sourced online or purchased instore. Even though white seems like it's white, there are different shades and there's a white that has a slight blue light to it, which we want to stay away from. It almost has like a purple haze to it. It's quite difficult to see the difference, but if you put the two whites together it's easy to identify. Like with blacks, you can have a blue-black or a red-black. If you're backstage and you're under the blue lights, you can just look around at the crew and see the difference. If it's got that red tinge to it, it just shows up under certain lighting, and the same thing happens with white. So that's what I'm going to endeavour to avoid, getting anything like that. But because we won't see the lighting until we're in the theatre, there might be a few returns or swap outs of certain things that don't work. It will be a little bit of playing it by ear once we get to that stage.

As a designer who's owned their own fashion label in the past, how does it differ designing for stage productions compared to things people buy to wear? Does it impact the final design?

Yeah, it definitely impacts the final design. The process for me is very similar. It starts with researching things and looking at what the look is supposed to be. Whether we're designing something for a high-end fashion label or ready to wear mainstream clothing. For me, each collection that you do – the designing and creating, and the build of a show – is a little bit similar in creating a sample range, so that first range where there's one of everything. It's a similar process where you've got to work to a budget. You have to work to what the look is meant to be, and what the director – whether it's the director of the fashion company or the director of the production – is looking for then how you create that in the costume or in everyday clothing. Finally, you need to consider the cost of the fabrics and the wear of it.

When it comes to theatre, particularly, you have to consider how it is worn. What does the performer need to be able to do in it? Things like a hat for example, if you're designing a hat to walk down the street in, its purpose can be to keep your head warm or the sun off your face. You don't have to be thinking about will the audience be able to hear me? Will the mic be seen? Can the performer hear the music? With theatre, it's more

about what's going to be done in the costume. Similar to if you're designing for a sportswear range, someone doesn't want it made out of denim, that would come into consideration. So it's a very similar process and you have to look at what the outcome of each thing is. Obviously, the final look is very different.

Finally, if there are any secondary school students out there designing costumes for a school or community production for the first time, what advice would you give to help them out along the process?

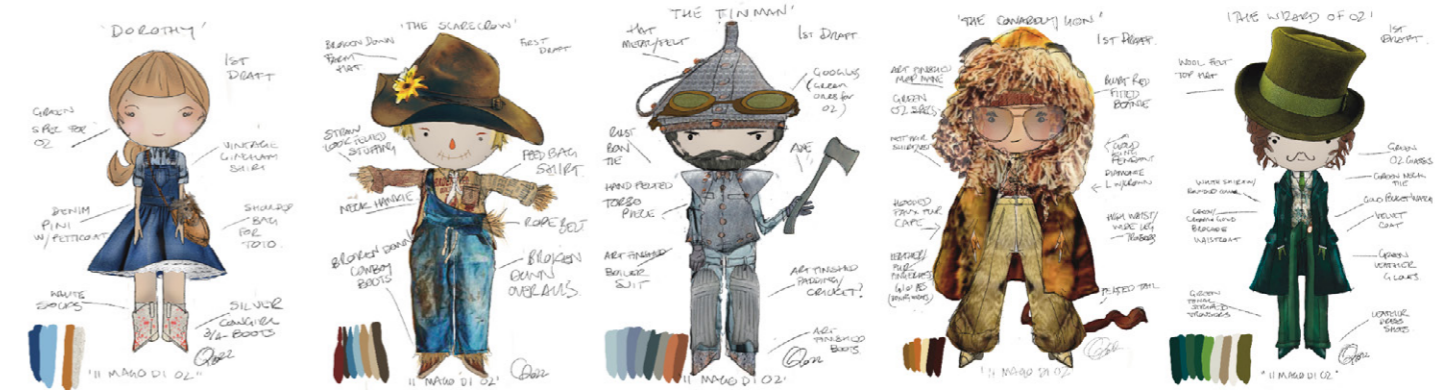
Well, all those things I've just said about doing your research. What does the performer need to do in that costume? How is it going to be maintained, the laundry of it? That then determines your choices of fabric and what you'll make it out of, knowing that it has to be worn eight shows a week and it needs to be laundered every other show – or sometimes, depending on the costume and what the performer is doing in it, it needs to be laundered every show. That will certainly influence your choice of fabric.

Ask questions, keep learning. Be a sponge. Research as much as you can about the period that your costumes are set in and the purpose of them. Consider what the cast need to do in the costumes. For example, are they dancing in them, singing in them? Are they on the floor a lot and if so, will they need knee pads underneath to protect their knees? You need to think about all of those different little elements that go into it that's not just about the look, but really about the wear of the costume and how it's going to hold up under what it needs to be put through.

Costume renderings

'11 MAGO DI OZ' - VICTORIAN OPERA 2022
COSTUME DESIGNS - PRINCIPALS (1ST SKETCHES)

THE GANG & THE WIZARD —



THE WITCHES & QUEEN —



*THE GANG & THE WIZARD — WITH 02 SPECS



MR SURJANTO



Visual Arts & Design – Activities

Activity one: Design a costume

Read the interview with the designer Mel Serjeant found on pages 12-14 of this resource. Underline some of the elements she discusses that need to be considered when designing costumes for a production.

Then, read the synopsis of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. A detailed synopsis can be found at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Wonderful-Wizard-of-Oz>.

Finally, chose two of the characters listed below and design their costumes:

- Dorothy
- The Tin Man
- The Cowardly Lion
- The Scarecrow
- The Wicked Witch from the West
- The Queen of the Field Mice
- The Good Witch of the North

Activity two: Design the World of Oz

Read the synopsis of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, then draw a picture of one of the scenes from the book, based on how you imagine it.

- Emerald City
- Land of the Winkies in the West
- Wicked Witch of the West's castle
- Glinda's Castle in the Land of the Quadlings

A detailed synopsis can be found at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Wonderful-Wizard-of-Oz>.

Activity three: Design the set

Using the picture you drew in Activity two, design the set for an operatic production of *Il Mago di Oz* (*The Wizard of Oz*), considering the following:

- Where the orchestra will go – onstage or in the pit?
- How the singers will enter and exit the stage
- Any set elements that move on and off the stage and how this is done.

If you're in a higher year level, you can build a set model box that illustrates your design instead.

Present your picture or set model box to your classmates, explaining the design concept and where you drew your inspiration from.

Activity four: Post-performance comparison

After watching a performance of Victorian Opera's *Il Mago di Oz* at the Palais Theatre in St Kilda, discuss the set and costume designs as a class, answering the following questions:

- What did you like or dislike about the production's design?
- What did you notice about how the cast members utilised the set and moved in their costumes?
- What would you have changed about the design?
- Do you think the design was effective in transporting you into the world of the production?
- Compare Victorian Opera's design with your own that you created in Activities one and three.

English

About the author, Lyman Frank Baum

Lyman Frank Baum was an American writer of children's fiction, plays, short stories and fantasy. He made most of his wealth from his work *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, which he wrote and published in 1900, and the thirteen books that would form the Oz series.

Baum was born into a devout Methodist family of German and Scots-Irish origin. His mother was a direct descendant of Thomas Stanton, one of the Four Founders of what is now Stonington, Connecticut. His father was a businessman who made his wealth in the oil field of Pennsylvania. Baum began attending school at the age of 12 but was home-schooled before this age with his siblings. He only attended the Academy for two years due to his constant ill health and his inclination to daydream.

Baum began writing from an early age and was encouraged by his father who bought him a printing press, which he and his brother used to establish *The Rose Lawn Home Journal*. His infatuation with theatre saw him take risks and make deals that fell through, continuously seeing him fail and fall bankrupt. After losing all his money, he worked as a clerk for his brother-in-law's dry goods company in Syracuse. However, he wasn't able to stay away from theatre for long and was soon taking roles in plays, performing under the names of Louis F. Baum and George Brooks. His father built him a theatre in Richburg, New York in 1880, after which he set about writing new plays and putting together a company of actors to perform them.

In 1888, he moved to the Aberdeen, Dakota Territory with his wife and opened up a children's store called 'Baum's Bazaar'. It was very popular with local children, who would buy the penny candy and listen to Baum tell stories of faraway places. Unfortunately, this business venture also failed, as Baum sold goods on credit too often which eventually sent the store bankrupt.

In 1891, Baum moved to Chicago with his wife and four sons and became a journalist reporting for the *Evening Post*. He eventually turned his focus to film, moving to Hollywood in the early 1900s and starting his own film production company, the Oz Film Manufacturing Company, where he served as president. He died of a stroke in 1919 at the age of 62.

Baum saw a variety of success in his written works, the most popular of them being *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, which he published in 1900 with the illustrator W. W. Denslow. Baum and Denslow first worked together to publish *Father Goose, His Book*, a collection of nonsensical poetry which became the best-selling children's book of the year. Their collaboration continued until 1901, falling apart with the failure of their final work, *Dot and Tot of Merryland*.

Baum wrote other works in a fantasy fictional style that were based in magical lands, such as *The Life and Adventures of Santa Clause* and *Queen of IX*. He often wrote under different pseudonyms, such as Edith Van Dyne, Floyd Akers, Schuyler Staunton and Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald, to name a few.

About the book

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz was Baum's most popular work, voted as the best-selling children's book for two years after it was published. Baum went on to write an additional 13 books that formed the Oz series, the last of which, *Glynda of Oz*, was published after his death. The series was continued by other authors, notably Ruth Plumly Thompson, who wrote an additional 21 Oz books.

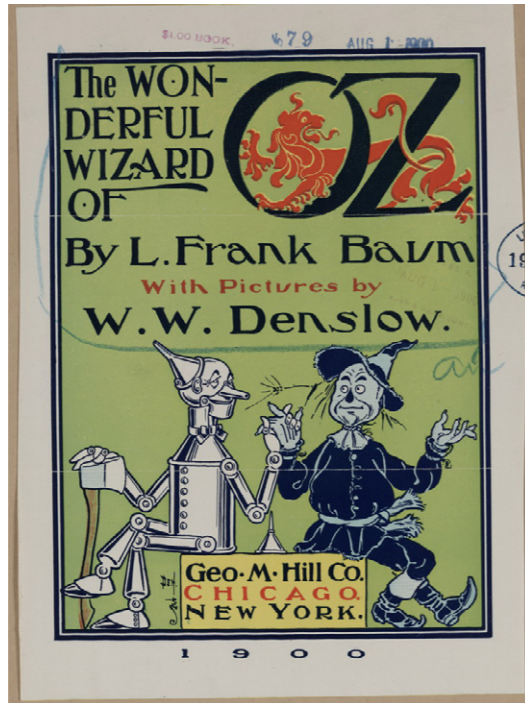


Image 2: Front page illustration of L. Frank Baum and W.W. Denslow's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

The themes central to the book were what appealed to young audiences, as its main message was that people already possess the attributes they think they lack. Some audiences also believe that the book confronts more complex political and societal issues. Baum is thought to have been influenced by his mother-in-law, who was a noted advocate for women's rights, and these influences are reflected in his creation of strong female characters, with Dorothy being recognised as one of the first female heroes in children's literature.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz was adapted for other media almost immediately after it was published. The first adaptation was a stage production based on the book, which opened in Chicago in 1902 and moved to Broadway in 1903. The 1939 musical film starring Judy Garland is perhaps the most famous adaptation, so much so that it became more well known to later generations through frequent showings on television than the original book. Other adaptations include Sidney Lumet's 1978 theatre production, *The Wiz*, starring Diana Ross as Dorothy and Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow and replacing Kansas with New York City, as well as Disney's *Oz the Great and Powerful* in 2013, which imagined events prior to those taking place in the book. Gregory Maguire's *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, written in 1995, was a hugely successful novel and inspired the blockbuster stage musical that premiered in 2003.



English – Activities

Activity one: Comparing adaptations

Read L. Frank Baum's original book, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and watch the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* and a performance of Victorian Opera's *Il Mago di Oz*.

Then write an essay that analyses these types of texts and considers the following:

- What are the main differences and similarities in the storyline?
- Does presenting the story in a visual format affect the underlining themes that are dealt with in the original book?
- What elements does the addition of music in the film and the stage production add to the way audiences respond to the work?

Activity two: Your Wizard of Oz

Read L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and note the different themes central to the work.

Then, write your own short story that's based on one or all of the themes the book explores. Take turns reading your story to your class over a few lessons.

Activity three: Class debate

Some literary specialists have claimed that L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and the other books he wrote as part of the Oz series, have a strong matriarchal representation as many of the lead characters are strong females.

Divide your class into groups of six, then split each group into three and assign each subgroup as for or against the below topic. Each group must research and present their arguments in a class debate.

The character of Dorothy in L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz was the first female hero in children's literature.

Winners of each debate will be decided by the rest of the class.



Glossary

Act – A component of the total work, consisting of its own partial dramatic arc.

Aria – An elaborate composition for solo voice with instrumental accompaniment.

Arioso – A recitative of a lyrical and expressive quality.

Bar – Also called a measure. The section between two bar lines containing the number of beats as indicated by the time signature.

Baritone – The male voice between the tenor and bass.

Bass – The lowest male voice.

Baton – A white stick used by conductors to direct the musicians and singers, allowing the conductor greater visibility.

Beat – The regular pulse of the music.

Choreographer – The person who designs and creates the movement of the performance, usually in dance form.

Chorus – In opera or music theatre, this refers to a large body of singers.

Chorus master – The person responsible for the rehearsal and preparation of the chorus prior to production.

Composer – The person who writes the music.

Conductor – The person who interprets, directs and cues the orchestra or musical performance, coordinating the performers and keeping the time through the technique of hand movements.

Designer – The person who designs the overall look of the production, including the sets, costume, props and lighting.

Director – The person who is in charge of the artistic features of the production.

Dress rehearsal – Often the final rehearsal of all the component parts of the production in full costume.

Duet – A composition for two performers of equal importance.

Ensemble – A group of performers performing together.

Excerpt – A short extract from a piece of music.

Finale – The last movement of a work that contains more than one movement.

Harmony – The chordal (vertical) structure of a musical composition, in contrast to the linear (single melody line) structure.

Interlude – A section of music between acts.

Intermission – A break in the performance that allows the audience to leave the auditorium.

Key – The tonal centre around which a composition is based, often indicated by a key signature.

Leitmotif – The representation of characters, typical situations and recurring ideas by musical motifs.

Libretto – The text of an opera. In music theatre, the libretto is commonly referred to as ‘the book’.

Lighting designer – A lighting designer works with the creative team to create the lighting, atmosphere, and time of day for the production in response to the book, while keeping in mind issues of visibility, safety, and cost. They also work closely with the stage manager who will queue the system controller during a performance.

Mezzo-soprano – The second highest female voice.

Mise en scène – The arrangement of the scenery, props, etc., on the stage of a theatrical production.

Modes – In music, any of several ways of ordering the notes of a scale according to the intervals they form with the tonic, which then provides a theoretical framework for the melody.

Music theatre – A form of theatrical performance that combines songs, spoken dialogue, acting and dance.

Opera – A staged drama set to music, comprised of vocal pieces with instrumental accompaniment and usually with orchestral overtures and interludes.

Opera buffa – Also known as ‘comic opera’, an opera with a large mixture of music, a light subject and a happy ending, including comic elements.

Opera seria – Also known as ‘serious opera’, an opera with dramatic, serious content, often with a tragic ending.

Orchestra – A large ensemble of instruments divided into four main sections: strings, woodwind, brass and percussion.

Orchestration – Utilisation of the instrumentation of an orchestra in the writing of a composition.

Overture – An instrumental introduction to an opera or other musical theatre work.

Principal – One of the main characters.

Pulse – The underlying beat of a piece of music.

Proscenium arch – The part of a stage in front of the curtain that separates the stage from the auditorium and provides the arch that frames it.

Range – The range from the lowest to highest notes that are played or sung.

Rehearsal – Where the performers and the director establish and refine the dramatic and musical interpretation of the production.

Rhythm – The regular and irregular pattern of notes of different length in the music.

Repetiteur – A pianist who works as an accompanist and vocal coach for opera.

Scale model box – A scale miniature of the set design made from foam core and card.

Score – The document where all the parts of a work, both instrumental and vocal are notated.

Solo – A piece of music performed by a single performer either alone or with accompaniment.

Soprano – The highest female voice.

Sound Designer – The person who designs the additional sound used in a production.

Stage Manager – The person who manages the running of rehearsals and performances, managing all the components of the production during performance.

Surtitles – A translation of the words being sung on stage, projected onto a screen above the stage.

Synopsis – A summary of the story.

Tempo – The speed of a composition.

Tenor – A high male voice.

Tessitura – The general range of vocal parts.

Time signature – A notation used to specify how many beats in a bar and the note value equivalent to the beat.

Tone – The interval of a major second or a sound of definite pitch and duration.

Tutti – A marking in a score that indicates the use of the whole orchestra and/or all the vocal parts.

Vibrato – A very slight fluctuation of pitch in rapid succession to create warmth in the sound.

Vocal range – The human voice falls into a range from the lowest to highest notes they can reach. The normal range is around two octaves and is traditionally broken into seven voice types from highest to lowest: soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, countertenor, tenor, baritone and bass.

Western music – A musical tradition derived from European cultures spanning the flourishing musical culture of ancient times to the present day.

Workshop – An exploration of a new work (production, text, music, design).

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Design renderings have been shared with the permission of Mel Serjeant.

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Images

1. Image of Pierangelo Valtinoni. Retrieved from <https://www.pierangelovaltinoni.it/>
2. Front page illustration of L. Frank Baum and W.W. Denslow's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Retrieved from <https://garystockbridge617.getarchive.net/amp/media/copyright-registration-application-from-claimant-l-frank-baum-for-the-wonderful-2>