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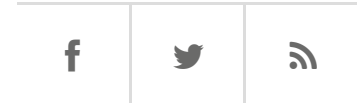
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The audience of the future responds to "The Magic Flute."

BY ANNE MIDGETTE May 3 at 11:37 pm



My review of the Washington National Opera's "The Magic Flute," which opened on Saturday night, will appear on line on Sunday, and in print in Monday's paper. I was, however, accompanied by a friend who was so eager to report that he took notes during the show, returned home and produced an overnight review on the spot. Here, then, is a ten-year-old's initial assessment, as told to me (with minimal editing), of "The Magic Flute."

By Elvin Canales

My name is Elvin. I am in fifth grade. This was my first opera I ever went to. It was very creative. It was colorful with a lot of shimmering lights.

When I first saw the Kennedy Center I was like, Whoa! It was so huge, bigger than my mind could have imagined it. And when I got inside, I saw all these decorations, and the redness, and everything that was very elegant. I was amazed that my friend Anne comes here all the time. And I said to my mind, This place is so beautiful.

We watched the first half of the opera. That was funny because of Papageno. He would always tell jokes, and then he would do something funny. I was cracking up. It was surprising how the queen came up from the ground and the fog was coming, and she told Tamino that he should rescue the princess, because she said she suffers every night. But I knew later that it was a lie. She was just trying to hurt her more, or get Tamino to do what she wanted.

My least favorite part was when the three girls started the opera, because they just started singing and stuff. They didn't talk first and then sing, so I didn't like that about it. But they got better and better.

I liked the three boys. I could tell they were kids because the grownups had a stronger voice to sing. But they still had a stronger voice than me.

And when the first half was done, at intermission I met the designer Jun Kaneko [*Ed. - Elvin initiated this contact himself when Kaneko was pointed out to him*], and I shook his hand, and I said that the play that he made was a brilliant play. And I told my friend that I was never going to wash my hand that he shook. Meeting him was better than seeing him in pictures, because he's old already but he still has that spirit, it's like so compassionate and creative and he has all these thoughts in him. But I didn't take pictures with Jun Kaneko. I took a picture with my friend close to the Kennedy head, and here is how it looks.





Washington Post music critic Anne Midgette and assistant Elvin Canales (with press pass) at intermission of the Washington National Opera's "The Magic Flute."

[We watched the second half.] I liked the guy that was conducting the band, because he took effort on all these three hours and did it non-stop, telling the band what to do when they mess up. I give him credit because when there was one mistake [*Ed: an ensemble came to a complete stop at one point and had to be restarted*] he just kept on going even though they were about to fail the opera, but he still kept on and it started going fine.

I had to go to the rest room, so I watched the end of the opera on the screen in the lobby. And the difference was that you could hear more what they're saying when they're singing. When you're in the opera house you see it [as] more colorful, and on the screen you can see their faces really close. In the opera house it's not that close — only if you're in the front row.

When it was over we got into a taxi. We were talking about how it was, and then when we came back, we started writing about it. And here I am, writing it on May 3. And that's all for today. I had a great night, and I would definitely go to an opera again.

"The Magic Flute" continues through May 18th.



Anne Midgette came to the Washington Post in 2008, when she consolidated her various cultural interests under the single title of chief classical music critic. She blogs at The Classical Beat, which she thinks you really should be reading. Follow her on [Twitter](#).

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riceowl1 Sign that kid up to write music reviews for the Post!
5/4/2014 1:25 PM CDT (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/style/wp/2014/05/03/the-audience-of-the-future-res...>)

Ikaserman

Wonderful! We saw it at the Nationals Ballpark Opera in the Outfield - and i felt the same way - loved the set design and costumes. There were lots of kids there - I wonder how they felt about it too!

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