

## Everything's up to date....

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Yes, I am in Kansas City. I got here Monday (today is Friday) to watch final rehearsals of the opera "The Giver" and then to speak to the audience after each performance.

This, if I get it right, is a link to an article in the Kansas City Star:

<http://www.kansascity.com/2012/01/11/3367828/new-opera-being-performed-in-kc.html>

which explains that it was a joint commission for composer Susan Kander, from the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Minnesota Opera Co. It is being performed here this week...final performance, for the public, tomorrow afternoon (four performances so far have been for school kids, 900 each time, brought in by bus) In late April it will be presented in Minneapolis (I'll go there then to see it again)

It has been a fascinating process to watch. The Giver, and the parents, are all performed by adult professionals; the boy, Jonas, by a wonderful boy soprano; and the other child characters—Asher, Fiona, Lily—sung by actual children (and the baby, Gabe...no singing required!...played by a live baby who darn near steals the show by way of his cuteness and placid temperament. There is also a chorus made up of kids from 8 to 18 who move the plot along the way an actual Greek chorus does, and who are well-trained by the music director.

The students audiences have been great: attentive and enthusiastic. This is remarkable in view of the fact that contemporary opera is a difficult art form; difficult for the singers and orchestra, and difficult listening for kids who are not familiar with the medium and might expect something more like a traditional musical.

There have been few glitches, and those tended to be with the tech stuff, because they are

using electronic projections to display the visions that Jonas "receives"...they have to be perfectly synched, of course, with the music; but they seem to have everything working perfectly now. We must only hope, for the final performance, that Jonas's voice doesn't change to *basso profundo* overnight, and the baby doesn't develop an earache and yowl.

Tags: Untagged