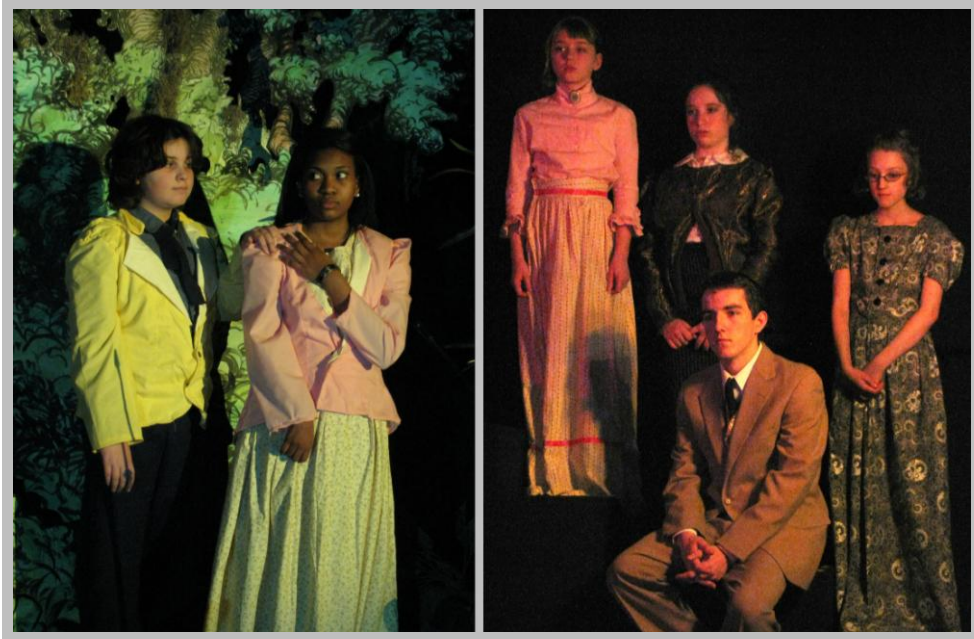


Princeton Latin Academy's 23rd Annual Opera

03/18/2011



Left Picture (L to R): Asher Muldoon (6th grade, Princeton, NJ), Bari Givens (9th grade, Trenton, NJ)
Right Picture (L to R): Helen Wittenborn (6th grade, Allentown, NJ), Sara Rukenstein (7th grade, Hopewell, NJ),
Elizabeth Biven-Tatum (6th grade, Trenton, NJ), Joseph Agabiti (12th grade, Ringoes, NJ)

Each year Princeton Latin Academy, a small independent private school rooted in a classical liberal arts education tucked beyond the trees on Route 518 in Hopewell, performs an original theatrical work-- an opera.

The School's rich [curriculum](#) of literature, art, music, history, philosophy and language culminates in the production of an opera. Students work with the headmaster and music teacher transforming a canonical piece of literature into an opera. Through this experience, children learn to be part of something greater than themselves.

This year's opera, the 23rd for Princeton Latin Academy, is a presentation of W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*. Francesco Perrulli, headmaster and founder of the academy, explained his literary choice saying, "February was Black History Month. What better way to understand than through a novel? Facts do not tell the story and Du Bois firmly believed in education, being himself well educated." Through this experience, students of Princeton Latin Academy are studying African American history through the eyes of one of the most esteemed African American scholars of the twentieth century.

Christiana Wittenborn, a 7th year parent of the school, said of watching her two children transform through the operas, "unlike a copyrighted production, written by people they have no association with, the children feel much more connected to the story because they know it was written by their peers."

One of the most impressive and important aspects of the opera is the writing workshop in which the two senior classes compose the lyrics for the performance. Helen Wittenborn, a 6th grader at Princeton Latin Academy, said of her experience writing the music, "It's not just about coming up with the right word, but the right word with the right number of syllables, with the right emphasis, where the [linguistic] emphasis fits with emphasis of the music."

While the opera, presented by the children of Princeton Latin Academy, is undeniably unique, there is nothing like experiencing the piece firsthand. The performances took place on March 16th, 17th, and 18th at 1:00 pm.