



Bruce Adolphe's *The Amazing Adventure of Alvin Allegretto*

Dear Parents,

I'm so glad that you are taking the time to introduce your kids to music, and specifically to opera as an art form! *The Amazing Adventures of Alvin Allegretto* is a wonderful piece, which you can use to facilitate some very important conversations with your children about being heard and finding your own voice! Here are some tools which may help you to begin:

Synopsis

The story takes place in the town of Harmony, where everybody sings....everybody, that is, except Alvin Allegretto, a 10 year old boy. He has decided to talk instead of sing (and to wear his clothes backwards) since no one listens to him anyway. His parents (Ama & Alfred) and his sister (Alice) and his uncle (Albert) are very upset. No one in Harmony can understand Alvin- they only understand singing.

To find a cure, they take him to see three "experts": Dr. Rodney Indeed, Expert in Everything; Dr. Marigold Of Course, a hypnotist; Dr. Geiselwhite Glacier, a really scary guy. Each expert fails (Dr. Marigold hypnotizes everyone except Alvin, for example). Dr. Glacier declares that the only cure is to send away Alvin to the Silence Academy for a year or two.

Desperately trying to keep him from being sent away, Alice convinces her brother to explain to the audience (who can talk *and* sing) what the problem is. It turns out that Alvin wants to sing his *own* song. Alice teaches the audience a tune so they can sing what Alvin wants, so that she can understand. The audience saves the day as they sing Alvin's message: "Everyone needs their own song."

In the end, Alvin finally sings along with the audience and his sister. His parents and Uncle Albert join in the final scene of celebration.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why do you think Alvin is rebelling by not singing?
2. How do you think Alvin's family feels about Alvin's rebellion?
3. In the opera, Alvin's father insists on taking Alvin to see three "specialists". Do you think that what is "wrong" with Alvin can be "fixed"?
4. Why does Alvin's father think there is something wrong with Alvin?
5. Have you ever felt like you haven't been heard, even though you are speaking the same language? Can you give an example? How were you able to make yourself understood?
6. Why is Alice able to get Alvin to "talk"?
7. Can you think of an example of a time in your life when someone helped you to be understood? How did that make you feel?

We hope you enjoy this performance and that you will share our videos with your friends! If you have any comments or questions, please send an email to info@orchestramiami.org. Thanks and Enjoy!