

**"I came to the conclusion that there is an existential moment in your life when you must decide to speak for yourself; nobody else can speak for you."**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Your Vote and Your Voice Matter!**

**Get the Information You Need to Vote and Speak Out.**

- Nonpartisan *Voters' Guides* in Print and Online
- Candidates' Answers to Questions
- Unbiased Ballot Measure Explanations
- Recordings of Debates
- Interviews with Candidates
- How to Contact Government Officials
- Advocacy about Community Issues



[www.lwvpx.org/vote](http://www.lwvpx.org/vote) [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)  
[www.lwvpx.org/advocate](http://www.lwvpx.org/advocate)

**Performing for King's Birthday**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

"stop right there" and be the next Aretha Franklin, or she could "be the best Verdi soprano the world had ever seen" by working hard for at least a decade, mastering vocal techniques as well as foreign languages.

Brown opted for the latter and never looked back. And after her debut with the Metropolitan Opera as Verdi's Aida, she received accolades far and wide. Brown said she's grateful to the black women opera singers who came before her, people such as Jessye Norman, Kathleen Battle and Leontine Price.

"I've been blessed and had so many trailblazers, she said. "I have a better opportunity than black men, and it's harder for them to break in, especially in leading roles where they may be kissing someone who's not black.

"I definitely have heard stories where black male singers have been hired, but once they get to rehearsal they are let go because the director wants to 'go in a different direction.' It helps to grow that thick skin that you will need."

Brown's path to stardom was a long one and she had to go through several auditions with the Met before she was finally accepted. The answer, she said, is just to keep on

trying.

"You have to keep going back. If they offer feedback, take it and take it seriously, because that is the upper echelon of our business," she said. "Sometimes it's not the right fit at that moment, but it's just for that moment they say no. When your ticket comes up, you'll be cake in the oven. Just try not to get depressed and weary."

This is the first time that Opera in the Park, which sponsors opera performances in Washington Park during the summer, has sponsored a wintertime performer in an expansion of their mission, said Sharon Buckmaster of Opera in the Park.

Brown said she's particularly excited to perform for the high school students. "I think it's exceptional that so many schools wanted me to come and present opera," she said. "From a cultural point of view, it demystifies opera."

Brown says Opera is for everyone. "It is not an elitist art form that is unattainable," she said. "Yes, it originated in Italy, but the subjects are far and wide, about people of the world. Opera is you. There are African operas like "Aida," there are Asian operas like "Madam Butterfly," there are Spanish operas like "Carmen," and American operas like "Susannah" and "Charlie Parker's Yard Bird."

EXCELLENCE  
**INCLUSION**  
 SKILL  
 GROWTH  
 OPPORTUNITY  
 INNOVATION  
 CRAFT

CAREER  
**DIGNITY**  
 PASSION  
 TRAINING  
**WEALTH**  
 DIVERSITY  
 FUTURE  
 SUCCESS



**WE TAKE A STAND**

Northwest Carpenters Union takes a stand for members and all workers. As a union, we lead the industry in safety, training, and wages and benefits.

**LEARN MORE**

[buildnw.org/carpenters](http://buildnw.org/carpenters)



"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence." - MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.