

“No Ladies in the Lady’s Book”

Suggested Response Topics



1. What was *Godey’s Lady’s Book*? Research when it was published. Can you think of any magazines published today that, like this earlier publication, are intended for a female audience?
2. Like the work of the women in the film *Hidden Figures*, the inventions of the women detailed in this opera have generally been unsung in transcontinental railroad histories. Did any of the inventions by women surprise you? Name a few that you remember.
3. The opera’s composer, Lisa DeSpain, has a background in jazz and musical theater, so her music includes a variety of influences. She wrote *No Ladies* for Utah Opera, to be performed by opera singers. Which parts of the opera, in your opinion, show a musical theatre or jazz influence? Which parts really make use of what opera singers can do with their voices?
4. In this recording, 3 additional instruments are added to the accompaniment. Can you identify the instruments by their sound? Is there a moment in the opera when you think one or more of them is especially well employed?
5. Composer Lisa DeSpain and Librettist (make sure you know what that word means) Rachel J. Peters could have chosen to make a serious narrative about these women and their inventions. Instead they invented a scenario that presents this history in a comic way. Does the comedy work for you? Do you get the theme of their opera, or would you prefer a more serious presentation?
6. Look up information about composer Lisa DeSpain and her librettist Rachel J. Peters. What is their next opera project together?

Write to our Resident Artists in the “Ask a Singer” box to continue discussion of any of these topics.