

ARTIST STATEMENT

Dana Beth Miller
Mezzo-Soprano

A few years ago at an opening night party, I was introduced to the Head of Cardiology at the local hospital. We started talking, and he told me how much he enjoyed the performance. He asked me all kinds of questions about singing and the life of an opera singer. After ten minutes or so, I started to feel a bit silly. Here I was talking to a renowned heart surgeon about how I warm up for a performance and how heavy my second costume was – not exactly life or death situations.

I told him, “Singing opera seems trivial compared to what you do for a living. You save countless lives every day.”

He smiled and grabbed my hand.

“Yes,” he said. “But what you do, makes life worth living.”

This conversation has stayed with me. I think about what this man said to me every time I step on to the stage. As a performer, I have the incredible opportunity to reach people in a very emotional and visceral way. Opera has the power to make people remember or forget, laugh out loud or gently cry, ignite passions or soothe pain. Opera is human and real.

I love my job and have dedicated my life to mastering the art of singing opera. I have often compared it to juggling. You have the voice, the orchestra, the character, lighting, make-up, the conductor, costumes, sets, and the audience all up in the air at the same time. When they all come together, it is magical and transcendent. And as one man said, it is an experience that makes life worth living.