

Shmanners 365: Opera

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[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, Internet. I'm your husband host Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: You're listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: I got that Monday energy.

Teresa: Can you tell? I moved my chair.

Travis: Yeah, man, you got way more of, like, a cool disc jockey...

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "You're listening to Teresa. This is 97.9, the Shmanners!"

Teresa: Why does me moving my chair make me sound like a disc jockey?

Travis: You just got a cool, you got a cooler posture. Like, you're about to talk to teens about drugs.

Teresa: Well, I don't want to be too close to the mic, but my chair has to still remain in the booth.

Travis: Yeah, I get that. You're afraid of the mic. Not me. I was born to the mic.

Teresa: I'm not afraid of the mic. I just don't want to eat it.

Travis: Okay. Don't. I paid a lot of money for these, there are very nice mics.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: Um, we're recording on Monday and it's not— No. And now I'm full of energy. I just got back from Miami, which was so hot and so humid and the food was amazing and...

Teresa: All of those things track for what I feel like Miami is like.

Travis: SuperCon was fun. I got to meet some cool people and see some cool things. See a lot of, uh, great trans rights shirts and a lot of pride flags at the convention, which was really wonderful and it was so hot and I look forward to maybe visiting sometime in the winter when it's only, like, 78 degrees, you know?

Teresa: Well, I went to Huntington with our children and we got to see SpongeBob the Musical directed by our very own Justin and Sydnee McElroy.

Travis: I don't like to think of us as owning Justin and Sydnee McElroy, but I understand what you mean. The girls loved it. They had a great time. They got to dance on stage with some princesses. It was lovely, I'm told. I was busy eating an oxtail stew that was absolutely incredible.

Teresa: Oh, delicious.

Travis: It was really, really good and having a Cuban sandwich for breakfast.

Teresa: Oh, I didn't have any of that.

Travis: Okay. So enough, enough about how great my life is and how cool your life is.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: What are we talking about this week?

Teresa: We are talking about how to dress for the Victorian opera.

Travis: Now, this doesn't seem actionable because, like, because if you believe in the linear time... Now, if you believe in cyclical time, listen up, because...

Teresa: It's coming back.

Travis: I mean, who knows, right? Maybe next time this Earth goes around, this will be the Victorian era. So pay attention folks.

Teresa: Well, I think that this is a good way to kind of, like, set the scene, paint the picture for things that our beloved Victorians did...

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: ...which is one of our favorite subjects.

Travis: It is one of my favorite subjects.

Teresa: It really is. Um, so we're not only going to talk about what a lady of culture would wear. Also going to talk about kind of the opera art form at the time.

Travis: Now I noticed you said lady, is that because at the time, gentlemen's fashion was a suit?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: I mean, so we—

Travis: "Try wearing some clean jeans and a white t-shirt! Nothing snazzes up your look like a jacket. Have you checked out pea coats, gentlemen?"

Teresa: There were some cool things that happened for men's fashion in the Regency period.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Um, and... But by, like, the Victorian, Edwardian era, we pretty much had settled on suits. There were different collars and ties and different cuts, but, like...

Travis: Ugh, blegh. Come on. Where's the lamaze? Where's the brocades? Where's the flash? Where's the, the lace and the... Oy.

Teresa: Well, cyclical, again.

Travis: Cyclical, oh, I hope it comes back.

Teresa: Everything that goes around, comes around.

Travis: I hope it comes back.

Teresa: You'll get to be a dandy one day.

Travis: I'm a dandy every day. I'm just limited by the clothing I can buy. If I dress like Stede Bonnet from *Our Flag Means Death* with, like, lamazes and brocades and, like, the ascots and the lace cuffs. And I would do that.

Teresa: You would do it?

Travis: Every day.

Teresa: Uh, okay, so let's talk just a little bit about opera in general...

Travis: I'd go to the gym wearing that. It would be wildly impractical. I would barely be able to move, but I'd hulk out every time I lift it away, argh! No suit can contain me.

Teresa: So opera is a form of theater in which music is a fundamental component and dramatic roles are taken by singers. It's highly dramatized and it can incorporate a number of other performing arts such as acting and scenery and costume and ballet, cultural dance, even circus tricks and acrobats.

Travis: How would you, for the, for anyone listening, who would be confused? How do you separate musicals, musical theater from opera?

Teresa: Um, so I think that... Definitely spoken scenes, right? Spoken scenes are something that musical theater, even if it's, like, almost all music, there's usually like a spoken scene lead in, in between things. And they is hardly any of that in opera.

Travis: Yeah. You might have like a line of dialogue for punctuation, like, at the end of a song or, like, to start a song or within a song.

Teresa: But there is no, like, like a bookable script for an opera. It's all in the libretto.

Travis: Yeah and, like, dialogue happens in music, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Yeah. And all of the story, not just, like, the, the characters, the way that the character relates to the audience, all of the story is sung.

Travis: Is Les Mis an opera?

Teresa: Mm...

Travis: That's a tough one, isn't it? 'Cause it's a— Yeah.

Teresa: That's a tough one. That's a very tough one. There are some who would argue it's an operetta.

Travis: What's an operetta versus an opera?

Teresa: Smaller. [laughs]

Travis: Oh. Because Les Mis is only two hours long, not three hours long? Is that what you mean? Like, it's weird to hear Les Mis referred to as like, yeah, smaller. Smaller than what?

Teresa: [laughing] Okay. So, it is definitely non-negotiable that opera is a key part of western classical music tradition. Um, and it can be placed back to Italy at the start of the 17th century. I mean, there's even some evidence as far as 1600 as the oldest surviving work being Jacobo Peri's, uh, Eurides. Euridice, sorry.

Travis: Yeah, there's too many... There's too many—

Teresa: That's a, that's a word that I— It's hard to say...

Travis: Too many letters.

Teresa: ...and read at the same time.

Travis: Too many letters and vowels, but it's not, I mean, it's not a performance that is done, like, 99.9% through music isn't, like, exclusive to Western opera, right?

Teresa: Oh, of course not.

Travis: Just when we're talking about the style that you think of when you think of opera, right? That's, we're thinking of, like, western...

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Right, okay. Got it.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. And so there are numerous different styles of opera and like any classical performing art, it's evolved over time with each country developing their own style. Italian works are actually quite popular throughout the rest of Europe. And also there are, you know, very famous German works and all of them are kind of, like, the center of high culture...

Travis: Can I put you on the spot?

Teresa: ... in their representative communities.

Travis: Can I put you on the spot?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Do you like opera?

Teresa: I have only ever seen two operas.

Travis: Mm. I think same. Here's the thing, here's the thing.

Teresa: I've seen the Magic Flute.

Travis: I've seen the Barbara Seville and something else. But I don't remember. But I know I saw it but I don't remember the title of it.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: I can picture it. It was cool. I liked it. I think the thing is, is like, I love the spectacle of opera and I don't know that I've just ever had the desire to seek it out, right? I think that two times I've gone, somebody else asked me to go with them.

Teresa: Don Giovanni. That's the other one I've seen.

Travis: But if somebody was like, what do you do for fun? It's not on my list, you know? I don't have anything against it. It's just not on my list.

Teresa: So, um, there are, there are lots of like famous composers, right? We, I just named two Mozart ones, right? There's Handel, there's Beethoven, there's Salieri.

Travis: There's Jim.

Teresa: What?

Travis: Jim wrote that one. You remember. Jim? He wrote that one about toast. You remember. Toast, toast, toast. Da-da-da-da.

Teresa: I mean, so... There are a lot of, like, big players and a lot of these operas are still put on today. And people usually state that mid to late 19th century was, like, the golden age of opera, right? And that is what we're going to be talking about today.

Travis: Okay. So you've set the scene. Ha ha, get it? Because it's opera, because it's on stage, right?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: So I'm going to the opera, right?

Teresa: And you would be very vocal about it because it makes you a very sophisticated person, right?

Travis: Okay and you're not just saying this because I, Travis McElroy, would be very vocal about it. You're saying—

Teresa: No, the Victorians—

Travis: Okay, great.

Teresa: ...loved to see and be seen. It was a social event.

Travis: They love CNBC. This is, uh, we recently did a live show at a place that had like, you know, box seats down the side? And I got to explain to Bebe, like, those are box seats and that's where, like, rich and fancy people sit. And she's like, "Okay," and I was, like, "It's not a good view of the stage." She's like, "Then why would people sit there?" And I was like, "So everyone can see them."

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: The best seats are, like, down in the middle or, like, the middle row, or, like, balcony and it was, like, if you sit on the sides, you're looking sideways to look at the stage, but everyone can see you.

Teresa: That's right. Because going to the opera was an expression of your sophistication and how well you were doing because you could afford not only tickets, but you could also afford to look great while you did it.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, and here's the thing, right? The stages and the auditoriums were lit by chandeliers that didn't get put out during the show.

Travis: Like in Phantom of the Opera.

Teresa: Sure. Yeah.

Travis: Because he crashes the chandelier.

Teresa: Yeah, and—

Travis: It's the best part of the show, it happens right at the beginning.

Teresa: Exactly like you said, you could actually see the audience. The audience was not as lit as the people on the stage, but definitely it wasn't dark.

Travis: It wasn't, it wasn't electric lighting, right? Were these candles?

Teresa: Gas lighting, usually, at this point.

Travis: Gas lighting, yeah.

Teresa: But yeah, of them had been converted to electric, but still.

Travis: We've done hundreds of episodes and we've talked about the past a lot. At some point in my life, I will learn the timeline of, like, electricity and lighting and gas and— I promise. Folks. I'm almost 40. I don't know when

I'll do it, but soon. By the time I'm 50, I'll have figured out when people started using electric light bulbs. I promise.

Teresa: They were, some opera houses were retrofitted with electric lights in the late 1800s. And the audience complained about this.

Travis: Oh, really?

Teresa: They did not like being in the dark because they couldn't be seen, they couldn't be seen by other people.

Travis: Ooh. Oh, okay. I also bet at that point there was a hum with, like, you know, with the first generation of light bulbs. If you ever get to be around them or whatever, there was like a like, [hums].

Teresa: And if you had enough of them...

Travis: Yeah. Right.

Teresa: Could be pretty loud. Um, so, like, if you were completely decked out in long opera cloaks and fine hats and jewelry and...

Travis: Opera gloves.

Teresa: ... gloves and things like that you wanted, you wanted to be seen wearing it, right? Like being in the dark for most of the show?

Travis: Who cares?

Teresa: Who cares. And so that is the reason why opera glasses specifically became an essential accessory.

Travis: Because of the night vision.

Teresa: No.

Travis: No, okay.

Teresa: So it is another way to accessorize your ensemble, right? And they became decorated with, you know, stones and they were...

Travis: Gold filigree.

Teresa: Gold filigree and things like that. And these were, like, specific for the opera.

Travis: Those are the things that, like, on the one... [crosstalk]

Teresa: Yeah. Tiny binoculars attached to a handle.

Travis: ... to make you look, like, an owl?

Teresa: So here's the thing.

Travis: I bet they talked a lot more, too, than we would think now, right?

Teresa: In the audience? Absolutely, they did. Um, so opera goers would chat to each other. They would even walk out, around, out of their seats. They might bring cards and play card games.

Travis: Get out of the town.

Teresa: I know, right? Because it was kind of like a party with an opera happening. It wasn't like what we think of going to the theater today where everyone's very polite and quiet and you don't even want to unwrap your candies, right?

Travis: I mean, I guess it's different if you're used to it as a performer. And that's the thing because that's the thing, like, when you think about... and this is jumping way, way back, of course, but to, like, Shakespeare actually being performed in, like, the 1600s, of, like, everybody's talking, everybody's getting drunk, there's stuff going on! It's just part of it, right?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: It's a lot more interactive. It's a lot more what's going on. But I cannot imagine. Maybe that's why you get those things in, like, operas of, like, this person is about to have a big solo. They step down stage...

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: And it's, like, hey, everybody shut up for a second. I'm about to do something really cool.

Teresa: Right. And these were massive stars of the day. So, like, people would stop talking during the arias which are kind of, like...

Travis: Monologues.

Teresa: Monologues. Right. But sung. And so people would stop talking during those to kind of watch, like, the primadonna or whatever and clap for them and then go back to their card games.

Travis: That's the other thing. And I'm sure we've talked about it because we talk about theater a lot on this show. But the switch over from very presentational theater to very, like, realistic theater has only been in the last, like, 50, 60, 70 years, right? And so this thing where, like, this is still very much, like, [overdramatic] "Oh no, I'm scared!" Right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: And, like, that thing of like, it's time for me to address the audience, I'm going to step down stage and look directly at the audience. But that makes a lot more sense when everybody is, like, barely paying attention and you want to get something across in the story, you got to be kind of big.

Teresa: Exactly. Exactly. And there were definitely people who complained about this kind of, like, social expectation, you know.

Travis: Nerds.

Teresa: [pointedly] Music lovers.

Travis: Okay, yeah.

Teresa: Would complain about the bad manners. And if someone was incredibly ostentatious during the performance, especially when most people were kind of paying attention to an aria on stage, it could be reported as bad form in, you know, whatever social newspapers were around at the time.

Travis: But also I bet a lot of that had to do with, like, a class system thing...

Teresa: Certainly.

Travis: ...of, like, if you're like a rich, you know, powerful person who wants to listen and somebody in the quote unquote rabble is talking, you complain. if you're someone in the quote unquote rabble who wants to listen and like there's a duchess up there having a loud conversation. What are you gonna do, you know?

Teresa: What are you gonna do? Um, okay, so let's talk about the rules of dress.

Travis: Let's do. But first how about a word from some other Max Fun shows?

[ad break]

Speaker 1: What is up, people of the world? Do you have an argument that you keep having with your friends and you just can't seem to settle it and you're sitting there arguing about whether it's Star Trek or Star Wars? Or you can't decide what is the best nut or can't agree on what is the best cheese? Stop doing that. Listen to We Got This with Mark and Hal, only on Max Fun.

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Speaker 4: He just does it wrong.

Speaker 2: Someone in your life is wrong about something, something small, something weird, something vitally important. Only one person has the courage to tell them just how wrong they are.

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-

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[ad break ends]

Travis: So I assume we were wearing t-shirts that say, like, "I heart opera," right? And, like, "It's over when she sings," right?

Teresa: No.

Travis: Where did that come from? You know, "it's over when..." I don't want to say when the... that lady sings, you know, when that lady sings.

Teresa: I don't know. We should add it to our idioms.

Travis: I'm gonna look it up, hold on.

Teresa: Oh, you're gonna look it up right now?

Travis: Because I think it's opera specific, right? So you talk about it and I'm going to look up why that became a phrase.

Teresa: Okay. So rules for the opera varied upon, you know, the which city you were in, for example. But the rule was the same, you were going to be seen, right? So that meant even at larger more famous operas, everyone was expected to wear full evening dress. So for ladies, let's say in London, this meant a low wide neckline that bears the chest and shoulders and I mean, of course, the finest fabrics, but the coordination is really important, right?

So there were even style guides and dress experts who would talk about what to wear to an evening opera. And it varied between opera houses, right? So imagine if you were going to the movies and you felt like you had to be sure that your outfit matched the carpet of the movie theater, right? Think Met Gala.

Travis: Oh, okay!

Teresa: Right? So, like, Blake Lively, for example, is very famous for complementing or matching or contrasting the carpet, right? That's one of the things that has come out recently where like she'll ask Anna Wintour what color the carpet is going to be? And then use the—

Travis: Paisley.

Teresa: ... use the colors that would work best against the carpet. Um, so here's the gown, right? It was usually quite a firm fabric because in the Victorian area, you're...

Travis: Structured.

Teresa: You're thinking about something that would, exactly, would have structure. If you wore—

Travis: Because, like, there was a lot of like manipulating the silhouette, right? Where you're getting like the bustle and the like bumps on the side and the corset and, like, you're building your silhouette instead of dressing to match the silhouette you have.

Teresa: Exactly. And remember that you are going to be sitting, this isn't like at a ball where you might be standing more often than sitting. So the waistline is going to get crushed a little bit and if you want it to still look good once you stand up again, you can't have something like tulle.

Travis: Right, taffeta.

Teresa: Or something like that, right? Um, in fact, the Art of Dressing Well, which was written in 1870 advises, "thin dresses, although often worn, must be crushed in at the opera house, so are not suitable as silks of light color, appropriately trimmed with soft lace around the shoulders and arms."

Travis: That's why I make all of my opera dresses out of cardboard. It's not going anywhere. You know what I mean? Cardboard dresses. It's a new thing. And plus your kids can draw on them when they get bored. Probably not a lot of kids at the opera, right? That was probably not a thing.

Teresa: No, I don't think so. And, if you are lucky enough to sit in one of those boxes, you want to make sure that your outfit goes with the decor in the box as well.

Travis: Of course.

Teresa: Because that's where people are going to look at you, most often, being seated in the box.

Travis: And bring an attractive butler in case they see your butler.

Teresa: Sure, why not?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Um, rosy pink should be avoided because if you sit next to someone wearing scarlet, you spoil the effect, I guess? Maybe you'll look washed out next to someone wearing bright red?

Travis: Or it makes them look like the devil.

Teresa: And you shouldn't— What? The devil?

Travis: Because they're wearing scarlet red next to you, I don't know.

Teresa: And, you shouldn't wear blue because if you sit next to someone wearing a deeper shade of blue, you'll look faded and dull.

Travis: Oh, you don't want that.

Teresa: So you want to coordinate with the people you're going with in your box that you're sitting with and make sure that all of you dress, you know, to suit yourselves, but also to suit each other. Gold should only be worn as a trimming on a headdress or cloak. Orange was the only color of the yellow tinge that was appropriate to wear to the opera, but it was "difficult to manage."

I think that's because not a lot of people can really pull off orange. Green was also difficult to manage, but very complimentary to gold. So if you guys could work out, maybe one of you wears green and the other one wears gold, I guess. And purple was a great choice for a middle aged lady and she should be sure to wear it with gold and diamonds to give herself a regal richness.

Travis: Oh, of course. Yeah, just wear gold and diamonds, right? Like, easy. What do you do? Gold and diamonds are a neutral. We all know that.

Teresa: Of course. Black and white were always great options.

Travis: Especially do it together. Checkerboard pattern? Look out.

Teresa: Sure...

Travis: That's stunning.

Teresa: Sure, but make sure that you choose an appropriately colored accessory to help brighten the face.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, and pink was a good option, but not rosy pink because it contrasts very well with black and white.

Travis: Yeah. No, you don't want that. Do a deep scarlet like the devil would.

Teresa: So there are a lot of rules, not about the devil, but... [laughs]

Travis: Well, there's a lot of those too. I don't know if you know this.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. According to *Women as Decoration*, the style guide— I know. From 1917, it says, quote, "The woman in the opera box has the same problem to solve as the woman on stage, her costume must be effective at a distance."

Travis: Okay. But, once again, see, this is the problem I have. Ugh. There is a thing that happens here, and I don't know if it starts in the Victorian era, but I think it's very highlighted by Victorian era fashion standards, where it goes from the man and the woman both dressing to impress, to the woman becoming arm candy that dresses to impress as a reflection of how cool the dude is.

Teresa: Mm.

Travis: Right? Where it starts to be, like, my job, as the man, is to make the money and do the thing and, like, my success allows for my wife to dress ostentatiously and, like, show off and everything. And of course, that's obviously problematic. It's objectification and it's terrible. It also completely stunts the, like, male fashion industry where it becomes, you want to look like a business professional, you want to look, you know, like you're focused and let the frippery and the fun be focused on your arm candy.

Teresa: And that's not fair either.

Travis: Yeah, it's gross. It's across the board gross. It's bad for everybody. It just completely, ugh. I hate it.

Teresa: Here's something that both men and women wore to the opera: cloaks.

Travis: I thought for half of a half of a second, you said clothes and I was like, "Yeah, babe. Yeah."

Teresa: [laughs] No, opera cloaks. So...

Travis: To stay clean?

Teresa: Well, not only that, it protected your clothing for sure. But it was less crushing, right, less constricting than a coat.

Travis: Sure, okay.

Teresa: Um...

Travis: And you can kind of flap them around like Batman, which is fun.

Teresa: And it allowed kind of, like, a glimpse of your finery if you wanted to wear a waistcoat, right?

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And you can conceal your blade in case there is a duel.

Teresa: [laughs] A duel?

Travis: A duel!

Teresa: [giggling] Uh, so they were of the best materials, right? And you had the opportunity to show off different colors from the inside and outside.

Travis: Oh, yeah. One of the best parts of the cloak.

Teresa: Um, and you could have colored silk or velvet or even fur if it's a cooler season. Um, and the standard style was an embroidered or adorned cloak of satin which hung between the hips and the waist with a high neckline and a ruffle.

Travis: Bring it back, bring it back, bring it back!

Teresa: It is said, from the Art of Dressing Well, "The opera cloak is generally of white, either richly embroidered or trimmed, but colors are also worn but must be managed carefully to avoid a discordant contrast with the other portions of dress. The Roman stripe is a very rich effect when worn with the black velvet or lace dress or with the dress of pure white, but it deadens the effect of neutral tints and harmonizes, but seldom with any bright color." Again, I mean, it was just one more accessory that you had to coordinate with your friends.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Right?

Travis: And you could, like, hold them out and have, like, letters embroidered in them to spell out different things like you're at a football game. Right? Or it's like defense, but it would be like, soprano. Right?

Teresa: [laughing] Sure.

Travis: I'm a big fan of sopranos. Aria, aria! Do the wave!

Teresa: Maybe.

Travis: Okay. Speaking of, I looked it up, can I tell you...?

Teresa: Okay, tell me about it.

Travis: So, first of all, the origination of the phrase, as with a lot of them, but, "it's not over until." This is just the phrase. Anyways, "it's not over until the fat lady sings," right? It originated, most people think, in 1970 sports of saying, like, this is a close game and one of the accreditations goes to Ralph Carpenter where Bill Morgan says, "Hey, Ralph, this is going to be a tight one after all."

And Ralph Carpenter says, "Right? The opera ain't over until the fat lady sings." And it's a reference to the Valkyrie in Wagner's Ring Cycle. The Valkyrie Brunhildr, who has a 10 minute solo and, like, a 20 minute farewell scene that leads directly into the finale of the Ring Cycle.

Teresa: Oh! Okay.

Travis: And so it was, like, this big Wagner series that then there's this, like, 20 minute scene with a 10 minute solo, and then the finale.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Yeah. And a lot of people, if you've seen the Bugs Bunny opera thing with, uh, Elmer Fudd and he's got the Viking ears on and he looks like a Valkyrie? It's a reference to that.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: I mean, the Bugs Bunny is a reference, not the other way around.

Teresa: The Bugs Bunny is a reference— [laughs]

Travis: Wagner wasn't, like, a big Looney Tunes fan. He's like, "Oh, I love this. I'm gonna incorporate that. It's called the Valkyrie, you say? I'm putting it in."

Teresa: Let's talk about hair.

Travis: The musical?

Teresa: No, ladies' hair.

Travis: Oh, okay. This wasn't the period where they put, like,, birds in their hair and stuff, was it?

Teresa: No, not necessarily. Although, you could often adorn a hairstyle with flowers or ribbons or lace or feathers or things like that. At one point,

there were certain styles of feathers that basically, like, completely got rid of the birds of the era, right?

Travis: Oh, really?

Teresa: Where ladies had to have a certain type of feather from a certain bird and...

Travis: And they hunted the birds.

Teresa: To near extinction.

Travis: Oh, my goodness.

Teresa: But it wasn't quite fashion at the time to wear a full wig. You did have hair pieces but it was always supposed to look like natural hair.

Travis: Mm. Okay.

Teresa: So it would, might be like—

Travis: So this isn't, like, the Versailles, you know, Marie Antoinette, huge big thing, right?

Teresa: Oh, no, no, no, no. Um, there, it was acceptable to build up and, like, just add padding to hair, but it was supposed to look natural.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, most of the time people didn't usually wear hats indoors, but there is such a thing called an opera bonnet.

Travis: So is this like a fascinator? Was it like a little thing?

Teresa: So it was a hooded bonnet that was made kind of of lace and was very trimmed out. And it was more for if you were kind of nervous about showing your hair, it was a very personal thing, right? And so if you didn't

want a lot of people, like, noticing you or if you wanted to be noticed for your beautiful bonnet, like, you know what I mean?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And then we've got accessories, we talked about jewels already, but also the gloves, right? Gloves were very popular, um, and they had to be the long white evening gloves.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Teresa: White was very... Uh, it was to show off that you didn't have to, like, touch things.

Travis: Touch things, yeah. Because this was not a clean time to be alive. There was a lot of soot and industrial revolution is still using, like, smoke and charcoal and... As they talk about, like, gas fires and there was soot everywhere.

Teresa: Right? You could also bring a fan and a handkerchief to dab at your at your tears from the beauty of an Aria or you could bring a small bouquet of flowers to toss if you are also so moved.

Travis: Oh! Mm... And you know whoever catches it gets to do the next aria.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And this was— Men did walking sticks and stuff at this point, right?

Teresa: Yes. Yes.

Travis: With a hidden sword inside in case of a duel.

Teresa: Maybe?

Travis: It was probably only, like, 9 out of 10 of them had a sword inside. I get that.

Teresa: Probably.

Travis: Not all the time.

Teresa: Probably.

Travis: So, let's go to the opera.

Teresa: Okay!

Travis: Right now. I'm already dressed. I've got my cardboard gown on. I've got my blade. I'm ready for the opera.

Teresa: I'm gonna need a hat.

Travis: Okay. We'll pick one up on the way. There's, uh... it's not called Bat Sakes, but that's what I think it's called.

Teresa: [laughing]

Travis: There's a place downtown in Cincinnati. It's B-A-T-S-A-K-E and it's not Bat Sakes, but I always think, "For bat sakes!" And it's a Henshaw. Um, hey, let's say thank you to Rachel, our editor, without whom we could not make this show. Thank you to Alex, our researcher without whom we could not make this show. And thank you to you for listening. Why would we make the show without you? Is that right? Is that better? Okay.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: It's just my for own edification. It's a new month and that means there's new merch over in the McElroy Merch Store. If you go to mcelroymerch.com, we have candles now. We have a new Appalachian workshop with notes of lemon peel, cyprus, evergreen, cedar, fur, amber, and moss. There's a poetry corner candle with notes of ozone, jasmine, leather, patchouli, sandalwood, tonka bean, and amber.

Teresa: Mmm.

Travis: There's "Hot Yeah!" stickers designed by Sonic Fade. And the Garyl plushies are 30% off this month and 10% of all merch proceeds go to World Central Kitchen. Coming up, we got some live shows. We're gonna be in San Diego in two weeks doing My Brother, My Brother and Me, as well as an Adventure Zone with special guest Brennan Lee Mulligan running the game. Also we're gonna be... My Brother, My Brother and Me and Adventure Zone, I don't know, maybe Shmanners, we'll see. But we're gonna be in Seattle, Washington on August 31st and September 1st, New York Comic Con October 12th and 13th. And tickets for San Diego and Seattle are on sale now.

New York Comic Con will require a badge, but we're also going to be streaming it live and you can watch that without a badge. Badges for New York Comic Con on sale now. Find out all about this at bit.ly/McElroyTours. What else, my love?

Teresa: We always thank Brent "Brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today.

Also, we are always taking submissions for topic ideas and idioms. I keep saying I want to get another idiom show together. Please email those to ShmannersCast@gmail.com and make sure you say hi to Alex because she reads every one.

Travis: And that's going to do it for us. So join us again next week.

Teresa: No RSVP required.

Travis: You've been listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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