

Cassie Frazier

Queen of the Night Design Concept

In my design for *The Magic Flute*, I chose to emphasize the story's relations to the sun and moon, or night and day. As the sun and the moon represent contrast and opposites, I felt it to be most comprehensible to show that through color. The Queen of the Night is dressed in deep, royal midnight colors, while Sarastro is dressed in brighter, happier colors of warmth. I wanted to show this without completely spoiling the villain of the story.

My initial influence was my favorite book *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* that I found to be rather similar to *Magic Flute*. Both stories reflect the endowments and intentions of the Sun and the Moon. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is a fictional Hindustani tale of the adventures of a father and son. As I have roughly studied – and have great interest in – Hindu religions and culture, I thought it would be interesting to incorporate it into my design.

I was always taught that Hinduism is a collection of religions, rather than one basic set of beliefs. They have countless deities, rules, and traditions that you have the freedom to decide which to follow and what best suits you. Hindu culture, in my opinion, encompasses the concept of freedom. I believed that the freedom within the culture would allow me to go above and beyond in my designs, without distracting the audience from the storyline, which I feel is a very important thing to accomplish in Opera.

Finally, I incorporated the concept of 'fairytale'. As I want my design to appeal to both professionals and families, I wanted to add a fantastical feature to each of my designs that made each character more fascinating. For the Queen of the Night, I chose to inspire her by a dragon, hence her scaled open-front skirt and wing-like shoulder pieces.