

**DreamDome's seven year olds will perform half an hour of excerpts from the original kinderopera, The Giving Child, based on Grimm's fairytale Star Money.**

**The performance is on December 16th at 4:00 P.M. at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts, 6780 Depot Street. This is a short, half an hour performance for children 4 to 8 years old.**

## **The Giving Child**

### **A Kinder Opera**

By Ana Gonzalez-Porto ©2004

It was a cold, winter night in a small town that sunk cozily into a snowy valley, surrounded by an ever watchful, thick, green forest. The branches on the green pines that hid it from view were drooping with snow, so much so, that you could barely see the silhouette of the green pine needles through the moonlit shadows of the cold, winter night. All was quiet in the town as Christmas neared. But in one house, the parents of a little girl had been sleepy with fever for a long time. As the bright Christmas star approached, heralding the day when presents with big silver bows over shiny green and red paper would be set under the trees in the town, the only child of the sick parents found herself without her mother and father. She lost her parents to the fever they fought against so bravely. With them she lost everything she had in the world.

The little girl was told by men in gray and black suits that she would have to leave the very next day, the day before Christmas. They told her that people from far away would be coming to take her to a place in the city where many children lived who had lost their parents. The little girl looked around the little stone house, warmed by the fireplace with its small dying fire, turning to red, glowing embers. She would no longer be able to sit and read quietly by the fire, she would not be able to sleep in her bed with the canopy over her to keep her from dreaming too far from home. She would no longer be able to sit at her small chair at the thick, cherry wood kitchen table full of funny silverware marks from years of family Christmas feasts, passed on from her great grandmother to her grandmother to her mother.

The men with serious faces in gray and black suits told her she would only be able to take one toy with her. She searched all around the house until she found her little boy doll called Cherry Perry, who had always looked after her and shared her most important moments in life. Her father had made Cherry Perry and given it to her five Christmases

ago. Cherry Perry was stuffed with straw and had dark blue, shiny, button eyes, with and x for a nose, red cherry cheeks and puckered red lips, ready for a kiss at any moment. He had on warm, green woolen overalls and a heavy, wool, creamy-colored turtle neck, to keep him warm on cold winter nights like this one. He would be able to sleep outside with her, she thought, for she had no intention of going away from her green pines and soft, snowy hills and the squirrels, foxes, rabbits and falcons that had been her friends all her life.

The little girl put on her warmest wool shirt and long wool skirt, she took out her thick, purple jacket, knit by her grandmother and given to her on her fifth birthday. Thank heavens it was three sizes too big for her at the time, she thought, so that she could wear it now. Even though it was a little tight, it was still her warmest jacket and she could still button it up. She took out her velvet coat, a warm wintry-green cape with a green, velvet hood, and put on her heaviest boots with fur inside and thick soles that would last a long time. The little girl set out into the day just as the sun was rising, trusting that all would be well. “After all,” she reminded Cherry Perry, “tomorrow is the day we remember the birth of the nicest child ever born, who always helped others, he even gave his life for his friends and he trusted that all would well; and in the end, it was. We’ll be alright, Cherry Perry. He’ll help us too, even if he’s far away now.”

One of her neighbors saw her saying goodbye to her house and closing the door behind her tenderly, so that even the mice in the house would not realize that she was leaving them for good. Her neighbor called out to her and asked her where she was going. When the little girl told him, he ran inside for a moment and came back with a piece of bread for her to take with her. Although stale and crusty, the little girl was thankful to have something to eat on the long journey. She said “Bless you,” and went on her way.

As she walked out into the snowy forest surrounding her town, hugging Cherry Perry close to her, she came upon a little boy who was shivering with cold. He stopped her and cried out:

***(Sung): “Ah, give me something to eat, I am sooo hungry. Please, give me something to eat, I’m afraid for my life, I can stand no more strife.”***

The little girl looked at the little boy with compassion and asked  
***“How is it that you’ve come to be so hungry and alone, without even a crust of bread to help you to go on?”***

***“I lost my home, my possessions, to a mighty storm. My life was spared and now I’m looking for my sister’s home.”***

The little girl looked at her stale piece of bread and knew it wasn’t much, but it would help him on his journey.

***“This is all I have, I have no more to give you, but knowing what you’ve been through, I shall give it to you.”***

The little girl handed the boy the whole of her piece of bread and said “Bless you,” and she went on her way.

She walked along as her furry boots sunk into the deep snow and she stopped to say hello to her old friend the fox, who was busy jumping up and diving down into the snow where he heard a little rumbling that meant some food on this cold day. As she watched her old friend, giggling, and sharing the funny sight with Cherry Perry, she heard footsteps behind her. She turned and saw another little boy staring at her. His face looked as blue as the snow on a frosty, moonlit, winter night.

***“My head is so cold; give me something to cover it, please! I’m afraid for my life, it’s so cold, I’ve such fright.”***

The girl turned to the cold, blue-headed boy and asked with tears filling her eyes:

***“How is it that you’ve come to be so cold and so alone, without even a hood, to help you to stay warm?”***

***“My mom and dad left in such a big hurry. They left home without me, they left home without me! I tried to follow, but here I am...lost.”***

The little girl felt the warm, velvet hood around her head and she slowly took it off,

***“This is all I have; I have no more to give you, but knowing what you’ve been through, I shall give it to you.”***

She handed the boy her hood and said “Bless you,” and she went on her way.

The sun began to sink behind the snowy cliffs in the distance. Her friend the falcon was flying overhead and she waved to him. He flew down and landed on a branch near her, as if to ask “What are you doing walking the woods alone on such a cold evening?” Before the girl could answer, she felt a tap on her shoulder. It was a little boy who looked so lost, that she took his hand in hers.

***“It’s so cold out, night has come, I’ve no place to call my own. Won’t you help me to go home?”***

***“How is it that you’ve come to be so lost and so alone, without even a home to call your very own?”***

***“Kitty ran, I followed him, home grew distant, day grew thin.”***

The little girl looked at the little boy without a jacket as night was growing wide and colder, and knowing that she had no home to take him to, she took off her jacket and handed it to the lost boy.

***“This is all I have, I have no more to give you, but knowing what you’ve been through, I shall give it to you.”***

The little girl handed him her jacket and said “Bless you,” and she went on her way.

It was getting dark. She hugged Cherry Perry closer and made sure he was still warm and not too tired. The moonlight was shining on the crust of snow that had grown hard with each passing sweep of freezing wind. She looked up and saw the stars shining bright above her, crowning the moon like jewels upon the head of a beautiful princess. She saw

the stars twinkling one after another, as if they were speaking to her. As she looked up she heard someone say “Hello” behind her. She turned and saw a boy hugging himself as tight as he could.

***“You look so warm and cozy; your cheeks are still so rosy. Won’t you share your coat with me; won’t you share your coat with me?”***

The girl looked at the light sweater the boy had on that could scarcely keep a goose warm in this weather.

***“How is it that you’ve come to be so pale and so alone, without even a coat to help to keep you warm?”***

***“I was angry with my brother, he took my toy away. He wouldn’t give it back to me, so I left to make my way.”***

The little girl touched the warm, wintry-green velvet of her coat and slowly took it off.

***“This is all I have, I have no more to give you, but knowing what you’ve been through, I shall give it to you.”***

She gave her coat to the boy, who proceeded to run away and disappear into the dark, winter night.

The little girl began to look for a place where she and Cherry Perry could fall asleep. She saw a tree with a large hollow in it. She and Cherry Perry could certainly stay warm inside that cozy hollow, with the thick trunk of the gentle oak tree to keep away the sweeping wind and falling snow, she thought to herself. As she prepared to enter the hollow, she heard a boy’s voice.

***“What a lovely shirt you’re wearing, I wish I had one too. My own has lost its warmth, my skin is showing through.”***

The little girl turned and saw a bone-thin boy, with wide eyes, in which the light of the moon was reflected as he stared at her shirt.

***“How is it that you’ve come to be so cold and so alone, without even a shirt to help you to stay warm?”***

***“All our cake and sweets were gone and the candy was all out, so I left to get some things to eat and got all turned about.”***

The little girl looked out at the dark night and she knew that if she took her shirt off and ducked into the hollow of the tree, no one would see her. She took her shirt off.

***“This is all I have, I have no more to give you, but knowing what you’ve been through, I shall give it to you.”***

She handed the boy her shirt and she said “Bless you,” as he promptly put it on and ran away.

She felt a tug near her chest. “It’s going to be alright, Cherry Perry, you’ll see.” As she moved back into the tree’s comforting hollow, she looked up once more at the night sky.

She saw the shimmering stars, twinkling up above her and she felt warmer than she had with all her wool and velvet on. As she hid inside the tree, preparing to sleep for the night, something shiny caught her eye. “It must be specks of snow, shimmering from the starlight,” she told Cherry Perry. She looked on and realized that the shiny specks were falling from the sky, like big, round, hard solids that glowed and sparkled as they hit the snow with a thump. She stuck her head out and got closer. The night was raining down coins of gold! It was Christmas night. The stars had been watching her give all she had away and they were crying tears of gold. The girl scooped up a pile of shiny, gold coins. There were so many, more than she could ever use in the whole of her life to come! She realized that with all this gold she could buy a warm shirt, another velvet cape and velvet hood, a jacket that fit her just so and soft, warm bread with melting butter and sugar on it and she could buy a warm, cozy blanket to keep Cherry Perry warm for the rest of his life. She could have all she needed and more. She could help others with all she had left. The little girl looked up at the sky and the twinkling stars and sighed with a big smile, tears filling her eyes, and said “Bless you.” She kissed Cherry Perry goodnight and he kissed her back. Seconds later she lay asleep in the warm, cozy hollow and dreamt.

The End

Based on the Grimm’s Fairytale,  
Star Money