"Super Bowl 2014: For Fleming, will it be too cold to sing?"

By: Ronni Reich, January 21st, 2014

If you see an opera singer in the winter, chances are you'll also see a scarf wrapped around the throat to protect "la voce."

So how will soprano Renée Fleming, who will sing the national anthem at Super Bowl XLVIII, manage?

"One song, even a challenging one, shouldn't be a problem for someone in good vocal health," says Michelle Yagoda, an otolaryngologist and medical director of the Brooklyn Youth Chorus.

Coldness can cause singers to tense muscles in the throat or those that affect breathing, and the dryness of cold air can also affect sound production and quality. But the national anthem should be safe.

Proper warming up -- that means getting blood flow to the vocal muscles through exercises, not actual heating -- and the use of steam to maintain moisture can help, and dressing appropriately is essential. Perhaps we'll see a fur over one of the designer gowns Fleming favors?

Performing in frigid temperatures can pose challenges for performers of classical music. At Obama's 2009 inauguration, a quartet including celebrated musicians Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman pantomimed their parts as a recording was played to protect their instruments from the January cold.

Bruno Mars, who will perform at the halftime show, also expressed concern about the temperature to the Associated Press.

''I'm going to wear a beekeeper suit, I don't know,'' he said. ''I'm not going to know until I get there ... I'm not trying to hype myself up too much.

''I know it's going to be cold and I just got to face it.''

Fleming will be the first opera singer to ever perform the national anthem at the Super Bowl. She is a winner of the National Medal of the Arts, a four-time Grammy Award winner, and a regular presence at the Metropolitan Opera, where the opening night gala in 2008 was devoted to her artistry.

Source: http://www.nj.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2014/01/super_bowl_2014_renee_fleming_bruno_mars_too_cold_to_sing.html