

PLAYTEST CONTENT

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The Intoner

A Pointy Hat Bard Lich Stat Block



“When we think of acquiring eternal life, we think of deals with unknowable eldritch entities, of secret arcane rituals, of pacts with fiends of immense power, but we rarely think of the method most easily available to most of us: memories.

A piece of us stays alive through the memories that others have of us. Pouring a glass for those that are not there, reminiscing about the moments we spent with them, we call these rituals ways to “keep their memory alive”. We understand that this is a way to extend the life of someone past their lifespan.

Intoners understand this too, and take it to its logical extreme. If they can manage to live in the memories of those around them, if they can make people wish they would live forever, they will never truly vanish, never truly die.

The process in which a bard becomes an intoner starts with, of course, a song. They call this melody their Magnum Opus, and an hopeful intoner can spend decades writing it. This is no simple musical piece, but a verbal spell in the shape of a song, an arcane melody. The rituals needed to make a magnum opus vary by discipline and by culture, but the effects are the same. A true magnum opus carries a piece of the bard’s soul within it, as long as someone remembers the melody, the intoner can’t really die.

Once their magnum opus is finished, the intoner-to-be travels and plays their arcane song to those willing to listen. For some, this arcane song will resonate in a particular frequency, an earworm that will wriggle its way into their brain forever. They will never forget the intoner’s song, and in turn will never forget the intoner themselves.

To ensure their full transformation into a true intoner, the bard will die when they feel enough people have heard their magnum opus. Intoners call this their swan song: the last performance a bard will give in life before dying and rising again as an intoner.

Those that have heard the magnum opus will then act as the intoner’s living phylacteries. For as long as they live, the memory of the intoner will live with them. If the intoner dies, they will reform and rise again for as long as their magnum opus lives on in the memories of those that have heard it.

But there’s a catch. There is a reason why the last performance before turning into an intoner is called a swan song. Once the dead bard rises again as an intoner, they will never be able to perform their magnum opus again. They must rely on the people that have heard their magnum opus to keep it alive. Some intoners ensure their arcane song continues to resonate with new people by becoming beloved composers that inspire new aspiring musicians to learn how to play an intoner’s magnum opus, whereas others become tyrants that force others to learn their song so that they may continue to live within the memories of new generations. Which sort of intoner a bard will become, only the bard in question knows.”

INTONER

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 225 (30d8+90)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	23 (+6)

Saving Throws DEX +11, INT +10, CHA +13

Skills Arcana +10, Deception +13, Insight +8, Performance +13, Persuasion +13

Damage Resistances Cold, Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages The languages it knew in life

Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +6

Magic Resistance. The intoner has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Phoenix Song. A destroyed intoner gains a new body as long as its Magnum Opus is known. If more than 10,000 people remember its Magnum Opus, it takes 1d10 days to reform; if more than 1,000 people remember, it takes 1d8 weeks to reform; if more than 100 people remember, it takes 1d6 months to reform; if fewer than 99 people remember, it takes 1d4 years to reform. The new body appears within 5 feet of the most recent person to hum or perform its Magnum Opus.

Spellcasting. The intoner casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks):

- At will: *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *vicious mockery*, *charm person*
- 3/day each: *counterspell*, *cure wounds*, *shatter*, *suggestion*, *thunderwave* (cast as a 3rd-level spell)
- 2/day each: *confusion*, *dominate person*, *modify memory*
- 1/day each: *irresistible dance*, *mass suggestion*, *finger of death*

Standing Ovation. The presence of the intoner's living phylacteries strengthens it. For each conscious creature within a 10-foot radius of the intoner that knows its Magnum Opus, the intoner gains +1 to its melee and spell attack rolls.

ACTIONS

Siren Shriek. *Melee Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) thunder damage. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be compelled until the end of the intoner's next turn. While compelled by this effect, the target has disadvantage on attack rolls on the intoner, and can't willingly move away from it. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the Siren Shriek of all intoners for the next 24 hours.

Charming Chorus. The intoner targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can hear the intoner, it must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed target obeys the intoner's verbal or telepathic commands. If the target suffers any harm or receives a suicidal command, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. If the target successfully saves against the effect, or if the effect on it ends, the target is immune to this intoner's Charm for the next 24 hours.

Concerto (*Recharge 6*). The intoner directs a creature friendly to the intoner with proficiency with a musical instrument to perform its Magnum Opus, attempting to turn all within earshot into living phylacteries for the intoner. Until the end of the friendly creature's next turn, neither it nor the intoner can take any actions or bonus actions. At the end of the chosen creature's turn, all creatures that can hear it must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become infected with the intoner's Magnum Opus, becoming part of its living phylactery.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The intoner can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The intoner regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cantrip. The intoner casts a cantrip.

Siren Shriek (Costs 2 Actions). The intoner uses its Siren Shriek.

Charming (Costs 2 Actions). The intoner uses its Charming Chorus.

Choral Dirge (Costs 3 Actions). Each creature currently charmed by the intoner must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one and is no longer charmed. The targets' hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces

its hit point maximum to 0.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the intoner can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the intoner can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- The sound of the intoner's Magnum Opus fills the air of the intoner's lair. Each creature that can hear it must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is infected with the Magnum Opus, and counts as a creature that knows it for the purposes of the intoner's *Standing Ovation* ability.
- An uplifting melody fills the air of the intoner's lair, bolstering the strength of the intoner and its allies. Until initiative count 20 on the next round, the intoner and all creatures friendly to it that can hear this song have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed.
- A chilling tune fills the air of the intoner's lair, disheartening the intoner's enemies. No creatures hostile to the intoner can regain hit points until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The sound of a reverberating orchestra fills the lair. All creatures with proficiency with a musical instrument must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they each play an inspiring melody that heals the intoner for 1d12 hit points and grants the intoner advantage on saving throws until initiative count 20 on the next round.

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