Opera in Schools Study Guide

Touring Southern Alberta, February 21—March 17, 2023

Cinderella

An adaptation of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Massenet's *Cendrillon* by Rob Herriot

CINDERELLA

January, 2023

Hello Educators and parents,

Welcome back to our in-person school tour production *Cinderella*, an adaptation of two classic Cinderella operas—*La Cenerentola* by Rossini and *Cendrillon* by Massenet, created by Canadian Stage Director and long-time Calgary Opera collaborator Rob Herriot.

In this production your students will receive exposure to these two standards of the operatic repertoire in an adaptation that brings the best of both to your student audience.

We are so thrilled to be performing live, back in schools with students, after two years of virtual productions. Thank you so much for your support in bringing us out to your school community. However, after over 218,000 students signed up to see our virtual productions of *Hansel & Gretel* and *the Brothers Grimm* across Alberta these past two seasons, we realized that presenting a virtual production to students offers us a unique opportunity to share the magic and power of opera with so many children. Going forward we will be alternating in-person and virtual productions.

Please use this guide how best suits you and your students and freely copy from it as needed.

While we look forward to presenting our 2022-23 McPhee Artist singers, we also look forward to highlighting one adult from your school community to make a quick appearance as the Wicked Stepmother! This addition of a familiar face to the production delights students and teachers alike.

Please enjoy our production of *Cinderella*!

Sincerely,

Patricia Kesler

Education and Community Engagement Manager, Calgary Opera

We acknowledge that together we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7 region, which includes the Blackfoot First Nation tribes of Siksika, Kainai and Piikani, the Tsuut'ina, the Iyarhe Nakoda First Nation tribes of Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley and the Region 3 Métis Nation of Alberta.

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Thank you to our generous sponsors of the McPhee Artist Development Program:

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF OPERA

The word opera is the plural form of the Latin word "opus", which translates quite literally as 'work.' The use of the plural form speaks to the many art forms that combine to create an operatic performance.

Today we understand the word opera to mean a theatrically based musical piece in which the drama is expressed through singing and music, accompanied by an orchestra.

Traditional view holds that opera developed as a result of discussions held in Florence in the 1570's by a group of artists known as the Camerata. Their discussions led to the musical setting of Runuccini's drama, *Dafne*, by composer Jacopo Peri in 1597.

The work of early Italian masters, such as Giulio Caccini and Claudio Monteverdi led to the development of a **through-composed** musical piece made up of **recitative** (fast sing-speaking) sections which revealed the main storyline; followed by **arias** which provided the soloist an opportunity to develop the emotions of the character with slower musical vocal lines. The new art form was greeted enthusiastically by the nobility of the time and, over the centuries, to the public, where it became a popular entertainment that often dealt with the common people and stories of the day.

Opera has flourished throughout the world as way to express the full range of human emotions. Italians claim the art form as their own, with the bulk of famous opera composers being of Italian origin through to the 1900s. Puccini, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, and Leoncavallo developed the art form through clearly defined periods that produced ***opera buffa***, ***opera seria***, ***bel canto***, and ***verismo***. The Austrian Mozart also wrote operas in Italian. Further, he championed the ***singspiel*** (sing play), which combined the spoken word with music, a form also used by Beethoven in his only opera, *Fidelio*. Bizet (*Carmen*), Offenbach (*Les Contes D'Hoffmann*), Gounod, Faust, and Meyerbeer (*Les Huguenots*) led adaptations by the French which ranged from the *opera comique* to the grand full-scale *tragedie lyrique*. German composers von Weber (Der Fresichutz), Richard Strauss (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), and Wagner (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) developed diverse forms, such as ***singspiel*** and **through-composed** spectacles. The English *ballad opera*, Spanish *zarzuela* and Viennese *operetta* styles all helped to establish opera as a form of entertainment, one that continues to enjoy great popularity throughout the world today.

With the beginning of the 20th century, composers in America diverged from European traditions in order to focus on their roots while exploring and developing the work of folk music and legends in the country. Composers such as Douglas Moore, Carlisle Floyd, Scott Joplin and more recently Jake Heggie and Terence Blanchard have all crafted operas that have been presented throughout the world to great success. In Canada, composer John Estacio and librettist John Murrell were commissioned by Calgary Opera to produce *Filumena*, based on a true Canadian story of the last woman to be hanged in Alberta - which premiered in 2003 in Calgary to great success, and is one of the most produced Canadian grand-operas in the world.

Fire Shut Up in My Bones, Opera Theatre of St Louis, 2019

PREPARING FOR THE OPERA EXPERIENCE

The more students are prepared for this experience, the more they are likely to take from it. Knowledge of the story, the life and times of the composer, and the music is very important to making their opera experience a sensational one! *Cinderella* is sung in English.

Before the Opera:

- Read *Cinderella* synopsis (pg 8), as it provides a background for teachers in familiarizing students with the story.
- Learn about the different roles in the production by reading the biographies of all of the people involved.
- Learn about our production and what makes it unique
- You may assign some students to report on singing, characters, orchestra, costumes, scenery etc. after the performance at your school.
- Go over audience expectations (During the opera)

During the Opera:

Teachers! We will need the participation of one adult or teacher from the school as the Wicked Stepmother. Please pick one person for this role. They will deliver one line from the side of the stage during the performance, spoken, not sung!

When you are seated it is time to:

- Turn off all cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices.
- Pay attention to the whole production. Don't forget to look around at the set, the costumes and props
- Think about what makes a good audience member and discuss with your class.
- Keep movement and voices down to a minimum as this is a live performance.
- We encourage students to quietly listen to the performance. If they have questions or comments, there will be a question and answer period with the performers after the performance.
- If you must use the washroom during the performance, please do so very quietly.
- Applaud the cast as they take their bows after the performance. If you feel one person did an exceptional job, it is encouraged to shout Bravo! for a man, Brava! for a woman and Bravi! for the whole performance (most people stick to Bravo!).

After the Opera

One of the best ways to encourage critical thinking in the arts is to encourage students' honesty and draw out the details of their opinions. A productive evaluation session, spoken, written, visual or dramatized, may include the following activities:

- Discuss the production, see some language exercises on pages 16-18 as a way of approaching this, or just have an open discussion about the performance
- Sing! Everywhere, all the time. Try singing daily things to see how it changes their meaning. Does changing your voice, the speed, how high or low it is, change how the person listening to you understands?

VOICE TYPES

Voice Types

SOPRANO	Traditionally considered highest female voice
MEZZO-SOPRANO	Voice type between Soprano and Contralto
CONTRALTO	Usually the lowest female voice
TENOR	Usually the highest male voice
COUNTER TENOR	Higher than a tenor, but less common, however it is becoming a more common and popular type, and it is considered highest voice type for a male voice
BARITONE	Voice between Tenor and Bass
BASS	The lowest voice type of them all

Breaking down the voice types:

COLORATURA	Typically a voice with a very high range and the ability to sing complicated passages with great agility
DRAMATIC	A heavy, powerful voice with a steely timbre capable of great range and emotion
LYRIC	An average size voice, but capable of singing long beautiful phrases.
HELDEN	A German term referring to a powerful voice capable of singing very demanding roles
FALSETTO	The upper part of a voice, more often used in reference to male voices
SPINTO	A somewhat more powerful voice than that of a true lyric.

Educators: To watch a short but descriptive video on operatic voice types explained, go to the Royal Opera House London (ROH) YouTube video here: https://youtu.be/hLfvkwTnJVM

Opera Terms

ACT:	A portion of an opera designated by the composer, which has a dramatic structure of its own, not unlike a chapter in a novel
ARIA:	Italian for an 'air' or 'song'. The big number where the singer expresses feelings and shows off the voice
BEL CANTO:	Italian for "beautiful singing", refers to a style of opera that developed in Italy and was characterized by a small but dynamic vocal range requiring much vocal control

OPERA TERMS

Opera Terms Continued

BUFFA/O: From the Italian for 'buffoon.' A singer of comic roles (*basso-buffo*) or a comic opera (*opera-buffa*)

BRAVO: Literally, a form of applause when shouted by members of the audience at the end of an especially pleasing performance. Strictly speaking, "bravo" is for a single man, "brava" for a woman, and "bravi" for a group of performers

CHORUS: A group of singers, singing together, who portray peripheral characters who usually comment on the action and help to support the storyline

DUET: An extended musical passage performed by two singers. They may or may not sing simultaneously or on the same musical line

DRESS REHEARSAL: A final working rehearsal where all characters are in full costume with full set and live musical accompaniment

ENCORE: Literally, French for "again". It is shouted from the audience after a particularly well sung pas sage or, more commonly, at the end of a well-done performance

LEITMOTIF: Recurring bits of music associated with particular characters or moods

LIBRETTO: Italian for "little book", the written text of the opera without music

MAESTRO: The conductor of the orchestra

OPERA SERIA: "Serious" opera, a term developed in Italy to refer to operas from the 17th century with themes of mythology, ancient history and no comedic elements

OVERTURE: An orchestral piece at the beginning of the opera, a musical introduction to the opera

PREMIERE: Opening night of a performance, the first public performance in the theatre

RECITATIVE: Speech-singing where the singer chants the words in rhythm of free speech, used to further the plot or set up an aria, to communicate much of the story in a shorter span of time

SINGSPIEL: a musical work popular in Germany especially in the latter part of the 18th century characterized by spoken dialogue interspersed with songs, literally: singplay

SUPERNUMERARIES: Extra, small, supporting roles in the opera in which the characters do not sing, such as people in a crowd

SYNOPSIS: The story of the opera in short form

THROUGH-COMPOSED: A piece of music that has no repetition of musical passages throughout, but instead has different music for each ensuing section

TOI TOI TOI: An expression used in the performing arts to wish the performers a good performance which exists because of the superstition that to wish a performer good luck is actually bad luck

VERISMO: An artistic style from 19th Century Italy that dealt with themes of common people and daily lives set in a dramatic style

SYNOPSIS

Before our story starts:

Once upon a time, a little girl called Lucette lived with her mother and father. Her mother fell ill and, sadly, died, leaving her father to grow very lonely. He then married another woman who had two daughters of the same age as Lucette. Soon after the wedding, Lucette's father also died, leaving her with her stepmother and stepsisters. They were jealous of Lucette because she was very beautiful, kind, and thoughtful, and cruelly made her clean the house, cook their meals and sleep in the cinders of the fireplace. This earned her the nickname Cinderella.

Up at the castle, the Prince is very lonely and is looking to marry. His good friend and valet Crantini decides that the Prince should throw a party so that he might find a girl to marry. They decide to go from house to house inviting all of the eligible girls in the town to attend. Crantini dresses in the clothes of a beggar to test the kindness of the girls and the Prince dresses as a Page to disguise himself so he can see who is kind and who is not, thus making his choice for a bride easier.

When our story starts:

Cinderella is hard at work cleaning the house and her stepsisters Rubella and Roseola are dancing around and making fun of her when a beggar comes to the door seeking food for his family. The stepsisters, disgusted by the stranger, turn him away. In an act of kindness, Cinderella offers the beggar food and drink, and he tells her that this will lead to good fortune for her very soon.

Suddenly, the Prince appears disguised as a Page to announce the invitation to the party. The stepsisters demand Cinderella's help to get ready and declare that Cinderella is not eligible to go along as she is only a servant. Both Crantini and the Prince observe Cinderella and see her kindness, patience and beauty. The stepsisters get ready for the party and leave Cinderella at home. Once they have gone, Cinderella falls asleep by the fire.

During her slumber, her Fairy Godmother appears. With her helpers the mice, she transforms Cinderella into a beautiful Princess. The Fairy Godmother also gives her a pair of magic slippers – when she is wearing these slippers at the party, no one will know who she is! She tells Cinderella that she must return home by midnight, or the spell will be broken and all her fine clothes will turn back to rags.

Upon returning to the palace to start the party, the Prince takes off his disguise and declares that he has found his love in Cinderella. Crantini points out that she has not come to the party because of her stepsisters and, frustrated, the Prince requests to be alone with his thoughts. Crantini returns, pursued by Roseola and Rubella. The Prince, desperate to get rid of them, quickly puts his Page disguise back on and hands his crown to Crantini to make the girls think that Crantini is the Prince. The two girls throw themselves at Crantini and reject the Page.

When Cinderella arrives, the Prince, still disguised as the Page is spellbound by her beauty and falls in love with her immediately. They sing and dance until the clock strikes midnight, and Cinderella is reminded of her Godmother's warning. She then rushes out, leaving one of her magic slippers behind. The Prince discovers the lost slipper and is determined to find Cinderella by finding its proper owner.

Back at Cinderella's house, the stepsisters boast, untruthfully, that they humiliated the beautiful young girl who spent all night dancing with the Prince. When the Prince arrives to try the slipper on all the young ladies of the house, it does not fit Cinderella's stepsisters, but it fits Cinderella perfectly.

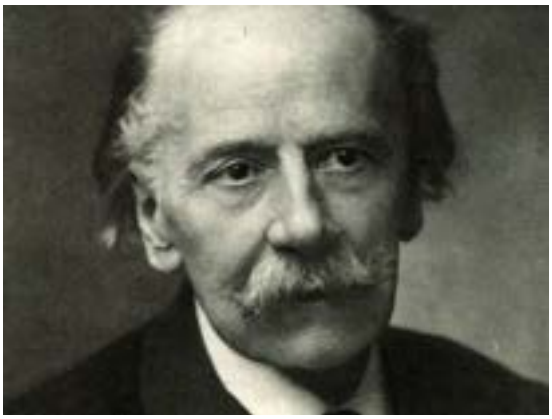
The story ends as the Prince declares his love for his newfound Princess. Cinderella forgives her stepsisters for being so unkind, and they all live happily ever after.

COMPOSER & ADAPTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Gioachino Rossini – Composer, *La Cenerentola*

Gioachino Antonio Rossini was born on February 29th, 1792 in Pesaro, Italy and was an Italian composer who wrote 39 operas as well as sacred music, chamber music, songs, and some instrumental and piano pieces. He grew up in the theatre as a son of a trumpeter and a singer. His best-known operas include the Italian comedies *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*) and *La Cenerentola* (*Cinderella*), and the French language epics *Moïse et Pharaon* and *Guillaume Tell* (*William Tell*). A tendency for inspired, song-like melodies is evident throughout his scores, which led to the nickname "The Italian Mozart." Until his retirement in 1829, Rossini had been the most popular opera composer in history. Rossini died on November 13th, 1868 in Passy, France.

Jules Massenet – Composer, *Cendrillon*



Jules Émile Frédéric Massenet , born May 12th, 1842 in Montaud, France, was a French composer of the Romantic era best known for his operas, of which he wrote more than thirty. The two most frequently staged are *Manon* (1884) and *Werther* (1892). He also composed oratorios, ballets, orchestral works, incidental music, piano pieces, songs and other music. While still a schoolboy, Massenet was admitted to France's principal music college, the Paris Conservatoire. There he studied under Ambroise Thomas, whom he greatly admired. After winning the country's top musical prize, the Prix de Rome, in 1863, he composed prolifically in many genres, but quickly became most known for his operas. Between 1867 and his death forty-five years later he wrote more than forty stage works in a wide variety of styles, from *opéra-comique* to grand-scale depictions of classical myths, romantic comedies, lyric dramas, as well as oratorios, cantatas and ballets. Massenet had a good sense of the theatre and of what would succeed with the Parisian public. Despite some miscalculations, he produced a series of successes that made him the leading composer of opera in France in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He died on August 13th, 1912 in Paris, France.

Rob Herriot—Stage director and Adaptor of our production of *Cinderella*

Canadian stage director Robert Herriot started his career in opera as a singer before turning his attention to stage direction. He has directed many productions for Calgary Opera including, *Tosca, Cosi fan Tutte, The Magic Flute, La Boheme, Barber of Seville, Pirates of Penzance, Candide, Beatrice and Benedict, Susanna's Secret, The Spanish Hour and L'Enfant et les Sortileges.* Other productions include, new productions of *Rigoletto, Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella* and *HMS Pinafore* for Edmonton Opera, *Madama Butterfly, Turandot, Lucia di Lammermoor, Rigoletto, Don Pasquale, Don Giovanni, Marriage of Figaro, Carmen, Daughter of the Regiment, Tosca, Magic Flute, The Mikado, Albert Herring, Gianni Schicci, Suor Angelica and HMS Pinafore* for companies across North America. His productions have been nominated for 2 Betty Mitchell Awards, and 4 Sterling Awards.

ABOUT OUR PRODUCTION

Rob Herriot's version of *Cinderella* was adapted from two operas; Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Massenet's *Cendrillon.*

"Both of these old operas are based on the fairy tale Cinderella. Because I wanted to create a version that was similar to the Disney adaptation, it was necessary to draw elements from both versions of the opera and put them together. For example, I knew I wanted to have a Fairy Godmother and mice in this version. There is no Fairy Godmother in Rossini's opera, but there is in Massenet's. In Massenet's version there are no mice, but rather, fairy's that sing in this scene. All I needed to do was make them mice and it all worked out."

"By cutting and pasting sections of each opera, along with the dialogue I wrote, I was able to recreate a version similar to that of the Disney cartoon. Furthermore by having music from 2 different composers it allows both the audience and the artists to enjoy two completely different styles and periods of composition. This ensures that there is an ever-changing "soundscape" during the show – perhaps something for everyone!" - Rob Harriot

Massenet's version of *Cinderella* called *Cendrillon*

French Lyric Opera

Cendrillon (Cinderella) is an opera—billed as a "fairy tale"—in four acts by Jules Massenet to a French libretto by Henri Cain. It was composed in 1894–95 and was first performed at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on May 24th 1899, at the height of Massenet's success. An immediate hit, with 50 performances in its first season, it is one of Massenet's most charming pieces and, after *Manon* and *Werther*, is one of the most frequently performed of his 25 operas, although it is not part of the standard operatic repertoire. The libretto is based on Perrault's version of the Cinderella fairy tale, very similar to the version most widely known in the US.

About French Lyric Opera:

During the latter part of the 19th century, French Lyric Opera accelerated the demise of grand opera by eliminating the spectacle of opera (large crowds, street scenes etc.) and becoming more intimate with a strong emphasis on the melodies. The three composers Gounod, Bizet and Massenet were responsible for this movement.

Rossini's version of *Cinderella* called *La Cenerentola*

Italian Drama Giocoso

La Cenerentola, ossia La bontà in trionfo (*Cinderella, or Goodness Triumphant*) is an operatic dramma giocoso in two acts by Gioachino Rossini. The libretto was written by Jacopo Ferretti, based on the fairy tale *Cinderella*. The opera was first performed in Rome's Teatro Valle on January 25th 1817. Rossini composed *La Cenerentola* when he was 25 years old, following the success of *The Barber of Seville* the year before. *La Cenerentola*, which he completed in a period of three weeks, is considered to have some of his finest writing for solo voice and ensembles**.**

About Italian Dramma Giocoso:

Dramma giocoso (jocular drama) is the name of a type of opera libretto common in the mid-18th century. Characteristic of *drammi giocosi* is the technique of a grand *buffo* scene (comedic) as a dramatic climax at the end of an act.

Themes in our production

Our production deals most consistently with the themes of: Hard work, kindness, and forgiveness.

Cinderella is kind toward the beggar who comes looking for food at the beginning, actually it is the prince in disguise, but she is unaware. Her kindness is noticed and introduces the Prince to her true nature. Despite the cruelty of her step-family, Cinderella forgives them and welcomes them into her new life.

CHARACTERS & CAST

CHARACTER	VOICE TYPE	DESCRIPTION	SINGER
Lucette or Cinderella	Mezzo-Soprano	Main character	Simran Claire / Justine Ledoux
Roseola	Soprano	an unpleasant step-sister	Juliana Krajčovič / Nicole Leung
Rubella	Mezzo-Soprano	an unpleasant step-sister	Simran Claire / Justine Ledoux
Prince Albert	Tenor	a charming Prince	Tayte Mitchell / Elias Theo-
Crantini	Baritone	the Prince's valet	Connor Hoppenbrouwers /
Celeste	Soprano	a Fairy Godmother	Juliana Krajčovič / Nicole Leung
Gladiola	Spoken role	a wicked stepmother	*Teacher or adult from audience

The McPhee Artist Development Program

Each season, Calgary Opera provides up to eight young singers with the opportunity to study and perform under a professional staff of teachers and performers. In its 17th year, the program serves as a bridge between academic programs and the professional world of opera, offering the experience and practical skills necessary to succeed as a self-employed artist in a highly competitive international environment.

The McPhee Artists perform the Opera School Tour every year in order to gain skills in touring and performing live within a demanding schedule. They rehearse the school tour production for several weeks before embarking on a 4 week tour that takes them across Calgary and Southern Alberta.

During the pandemic they gained the additional tools of singing on camera, film production and even lip-synching when singing together was not allowed.

Double Cast

When you look at the cast list above, you will notice that in the "SINGER" column, there are two names for each character. This opera is double cast. That means that each role is played by two people, depending upon the day of the performance.

Our McPhee Artists are performing this opera two times a day for four weeks! That is a lot of performances for a singer and is very hard on their voices! So, they take turns playing the parts. For example, the role of Lucette (or Cinderella) will be played by Simran Claire for half of the performances and by Justine Ledoux for the other half. Not only that but they rotate taking turns so they sing for a day, then take a day off, to give their voices and bodies a rest.

THE PERFORMERS

The 2022-2023 McPhee Artists, from L to R: Nicole Leung, Connor Hoppenbrouwers, Juliana Krajčovič, Branden Olsen, Tayte Mitchell (seated on ground), Justine Ledoux, Simran Claire, Elias Theocharidis

NICOLE LEUNG | SOPRANO

Nicole Leung, soprano, is from Toronto, Ontario. Most recently, Nicole performed the roles of Adina in L'elisir d'amore and Morgana in Handel's Alcina with Yale Opera.

Other roles include Rosalba in Daniel Catan's Florencia en el Amazonas, Nerone in L'incoronazione di Poppea, and Romilda from Serse. She also sang the role of Amy in a workshop production of the world premier opera The Snowy Day by Joel Thompson, commissioned by Houston Grand Opera.

Notable concert works include soprano soloist in Mozart's Requiem (Waterbury Symphony Orchestra), Beethoven's Chorale Fantasie (Yale Philharmonia), and Vaughn Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem (NEC Symphony Orchestra). This summer, she covers Adina with the Manetti Shrem Opera Center at Festival Napa Valley. Nicole holds degrees from the Yale School of Music and New England Conservatory.

CONNOR HOPPENBROUWERS | BARITONE

Connor Hoppenbrouwers has gained a reputation for the power and beauty of his voice. Born in Edmonton Alberta, Connor started his vocal career under the tutelage of John Tessier and later went on to study with J.Patrick Raftery.

Prominent roles for Connor include Count Almaviva in Le Nozze di Figaro with the University of British Columbia Opera Workshop (2021), Papageno in Die Zauberflote with The University of Alberta Opera Workshop (2019) also as a soloist with The Alberta Baroque Ensemble. An avid musician Connor also performs regularly with orchestra and jazz bands as a double bassist.

THE PERFORMERS

JULIANA KRAJČOVIČ | SOPRANO

Ottawa-born Slovak-Canadian soprano Juliana Krajčovič recently completed her Master of Music in Opera at the University of Toronto. Past engagements include Annina in La Traviata (Calgary Opera), Dr. Ruth in Escape Room, Susanna in Il seg- reto di Susanna, Marcellina in Le nozze di Figaro, Mrs. Norris in Mansfield Park (U of T Opera), Donna Anna in Don Giovanni (University of Ottawa), Tatiana in Eugene Onegin, Suor Angelica in Suor Angelica, Magda in The Consul, and Euridice in Orfeo ed Euridice (Shooting Stars' Operatic Showcase).

As a concert soloist, performances include Webern's 6 Lieder nach Gedichten von Georg Trakl, Crumb's Madrigals Book IV (University of Ottawa's CME), and Soprano Soloist in Mendelssohn's Lobgesang (University of Ottawa Symphony Orchestra). As the winner of the ORMTA Young Artist Competition in 2018, Juliana completed a recital tour of Ontario. Other prizes include Finalist Prize in the 2019 Brian Law Competition, Richard Bradshaw Graduate Fellowship in Opera (U of T).

BRANDON OLSEN | BASS-BARITONE

Branden Olsen is a rising Canadian bass-baritone, pedagogical clinician, and conductor of exceptional promise. In 2021 Branden won first place (voice) at the Federation of Canadian Music Festivals National Competition. He has a master's in voice performance and choral conducting and recently conducted the Atlantic Boychoir at the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival. Branden is excited to join the McPhee artists at Calgary Opera, and to work with Opera on the Avalon, this summer.

TAYTE MITCHELL | TENOR

A native of Vulcan, Alberta, Tayte Mitchell recently completed his Master's degree in Voice Performance at the Cincinnati Conservatory-College of Music (CCM). Tayte's past operatic engagements include Oronte in Handel's Alcina, Le Prince Charmant in Massenet's Cendrillon, the title role in Britten's Albert Herring, Vašek in Smetana's Bartered Bride and Satirino in Cavalli's La Calisto.

In Tayte's last semester at CCM, he was scheduled to sing Monostatos in The Magic Flute by Mozart but the performances were cancelled due to COVID-19. Tayte has been named an Albert Rees Davis Scholar and a George L. Hackett Scholar by the Singer's Club of Cleveland's S. Livingston Mather Competition in 2016 and 2019.

Tayte's studies at CCM were aided by the Arts Graduate Scholarship he won from the Government of Alberta both in 2019 and 2020.

JUSTINE LEDOUX | MEZZO-SOPRANO

Justine Ledoux is a mezzo-soprano from Montréal known for her velvety tone and for the sincerity and the intensity that she brings to the stage. She has newly obtained a master's degree in vocal interpretation from the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal and was recently praised for her "remarkably communicative" voice on stage. Her repertoire is varied, as she is particularly fond of Rossini, Brahms, Heggie and Bolcom.

During the 2021-22 season, she qualified for the Canada District of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, she was a finalist in the Prix d'Europe, she was the 3rd place winner of the CFMTA's National Singing Competition, and placed 2nd in her age category at the classical music competitions of Sherbrooke and Sorel.

SIMRAN CLAIRE | MEZZO-SOPRANO

Simran Claire is a Punjabi-Canadian mezzo-soprano from Vancouver, BC, with a growing reputation as an intelligent and flexible performer. An emerging focus on multidisciplinary work manifested itself in her acting as associate director on Holst's Sāvitri with Against the Grain Theatre. In 2021 Opera Canada praised as "utterly moving" her creative debut with a short film for Pacific Opera Victoria Dadima, exploring her identity, heritage and lineage using the framework of Schumann's Frauenliebe und -leben.

THE PERFORMERS

SIMRAN CLAIRE cont.

Simran was a Civic Engagement Artist at Pacific Opera Victoria in 2020-2021 season, a Young Artist at the Glimmerglass Festival in 2019, and has sung with Vancouver Opera and Opéra Royal de Versailles. She is a graduate of the University of British Columbia (BMus, MMus) and is a recipient of the UBC Medal in Music, the faculty's highest graduating award. She has been featured by CBC Music, Global TV and Opera Canada. Simran is also a trained bhangra and bollywood dancer, and self-taught quilter.

ELIAS THEOCHARIDIS | TENOR

Of Greek and Italian descent, tenor Elias Theocharidis has been noted as "…raw… and exuberant". Elias's most recent roles include Don José in Peter Brook's La Tragédie de Carmen, Don Ottavio in Mozart's Don Giovanni, Mr. Rushworth in the Canadian Premiere of Jonathan Dove's Mansfield Park and Nemorino in Donizetti's L'elisir d'amore. In 2019, he was the tenor soloist in Mozart's Requiem with the Toronto Sinfonietta under Matthew Jaskiewicz. He grew up in an artistic Mediterranean-Canadian family in Toronto, coming from a long line of Broadway performers, classically trained pianists, folk singers, ballroom dancers, fashion models and disc jockeys. Elias found his artistic path in opera and classical music, and as a freelance graphic designer and audio/visual content creator. This is his first year in Calgary Opera's McPhee Artists Program.

ARTISTIC AND STAGE TEAM

Every stage production has many people supporting it that you do not see. There are costume designers, costume builders, set designers, set builders, sound control technicians, lighting control technicians, stage managers, props designers and many more. One of the most important of all of these people, who brings a big unifying vision to all of the artists working on a production is the Director.

The Director decides how the performers act and interact on stage. They work with the performers to bring life to the words of the opera or play. Without the Director, you have a concert: a group of singers that stand on stage and sing their parts. Concerts can be really interesting, but a concert is not an opera. An opera is like a play, there is action and movement, and everyone on stage is doing something that supports the story and makes it believable to the audience. That is the Directors job, to direct all of that action so that the you can sit back and be swept into the world you are watching on the stage.

The many people who are involved in our production of Cinderella are:

AARON COATES | DIRECTOR

Aaron is a director, actor, playwright, and teacher. He studied acting at Mount Royal College and at École Philippe Gaulier in Paris. Aaron co-founded Trepan Theatre and co-created and performed in their productions of La Mexicaine de Perforation, The Cat Lady Show, Matadora, and SHE. He has directed shows across Canada and in London, England. He was Co-Artistic Director of Calgary's long-running improvised soap opera Dirty Laundry for nine seasons, directing over 150 episodes. For Calgary Opera he has directed past School Tour productions and has been involved in the Let's Create an Opera school program as both Librettist and Director. He lives in Calgary with his wife and two young daughters.

ARTISTIC AND STAGE TEAM

MEL KIRBY | CO-MUSIC DIRECTOR

Mel Kirby brings to his position as Manager of Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist Development Program over 40 years of professional experience as a performer, teacher, conductor and highly respected member of the Calgary and Alberta music communities. He joined Calgary Opera in 2006 creating the curriculum and framework for the Emerging Artist Program which oversees the annual post-graduate training and transition to a professional working career of an ensemble of young singers from across Canada. He has served as Artistic Director of The Festival Chorus (Calgary) since 1991. His experience also includes five seasons as Conductor of the Calgary Bach Festival Society and two seasons at the helm of the Civic Symphony. He has been on the staffs of the University of Calgary Music Department, the Banff Centre's Music Theatre Program Winter Cycle, and Mount Royal University.

EVAN MOUNCE | CO-MUSIC DIRECTOR AND RÉPÉTITEUR

Pianist Evan Mounce is known for his musicality, deft sight-reading skills, and ability to bring out the best of the singers he coaches. As a vocal coach Evan worked closely with k.d. lang, preparing her for her 25th anniversary tour of Ingénue across Canada. He enjoys a close ssociation with Calgary Opera, Cowtown Opera, Cantaré Children's Choir and the Calgary Philharmonic Chorus. Evan holds a Masters of Music from the University of Toronto and further studies include Opera on the Avalon, the Vancouver International Song Institute, the Centre for Opera Studies in Italy, and Opera NUOVA.

HANNE LOOSEN| SET AND COSTUME DESIGN

Hanne is a Calgary based theatre designer with European roots. She obtained a BFA in costume design from Maastricht Academy of Fine Arts and Design, and a MFA in scenography from the Technical University in Berlin.

Hanne worked across Europe, including on The White Night Festival of Saint Petersburg in Russia and the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music in Austria, before she called Calgary home. She is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada.

STACI HANLEY| STAGE MANAGER

Staci is a Stage Manager/ASM who has recently relocated to Western Canada after growing up in small town Ontario. Staci is an honours graduate of the Technical Production for Theatre and Live Events program at Sheridan College specializing in Stage Management. Some of Staci's professional highlights are Hairspray, Elf: The Musical, (Theatre Aquarius), Priscilla: Queen of the Desert, Ghost the Musical (Drayton Entertainment), Halfway There, Hurry Hard (Lighthouse Festival Theatre) among many others. This is Staci's first time working with Calgary Opera.

HEATHER MOORE | HEAD OF WARDROBE

Heather is a film and theatre professional based out of Calgary, Alberta. Her work as a feature film Costume Supervisor or Assistant Designer has taken her to locations around the world. She is the Head of Wardrobe at Calgary Opera and returns to film in between opera productions.

MICHAEL CARR | HEAD OF PROPS

GREG TURNER | TOUR CREW AND DRIVER

EXERCICES FOR STUDENTS

Language exercises

Recommended Grades K-3

Working with various Organizing Ideas of the of the Alberta Curriculum in English Language Arts for students in grades K -3, read the students the synopsis from page 8, then have them attend the performance of Cinderella

After the performance ask about their impressions:

- What did they like about the opera? What didn't they like?
- Did they recognize the three fairy tales that were presented?
- With assistance, can they recognize the different parts of the story? The beginning, the problem, the solution and the ending?
- What feelings did they have during the opera? Were they worried, nervous, hopeful, excited? Did those feelings change as they watched the opera?
- What were their favourite parts? Why? What were their least favourite parts? Have them retell these parts in as much detail as possible.
- Who was their favourite character? Why?
- Did their favourite character remind them of someone they know? Of themselves?
- The characters in Cinderella are generally kind or mean, can the students pick out who the heroes are vs. who the villains are? Are there aspects of the heroes that aren't so kind and are there aspects of the villains that come from a kind place?
- Did the presentation of the story, as an opera that is sung with music, affect how they understood the story? How? Did it change how they experienced it compared to watching a movie version? In what ways?
- Use the template on page 20 to have them illustrate their favourite scene or character, or act it out!

Recommended Grades 4-6

Write, draw or a record a newspaper, radio, television or web review:

- Did you find the opera entertaining? Moving? Funny? When? Why?
- Was there an outstanding performance for you? Describe.
- What parts of the opera engaged you? What parts did not? Why? Be specific.
- Did you notice a particular element of the opera? (Costumes, scenery, music, etc.)
- Who is the protagonist of the story, who is the antagonist? Could this be up for debate or was it presented obviously?
- Who were the "round" characters in the story, who were the "flat" ones?
- Investigate ways that you can present the information in your review to enhance the review, or make it harder to follow.
- Present your review with a partner in the form of Ebert and Roeper show and give it thumbs up or down. - Write a newspaper review for your school or community newspaper. Record a radio review or podcast about the opera.
- Send us your review! We'd love to know what you thought. You can email Patricia Kesler, education manager at pkesler@calgaryopera.com or you can mail in your reviews to :

Mamdani Opera Centre

1315 7 st SW, Calgary, AB T2R1A5

EXERCICES FOR STUDENTS

Recommended Grades 4-6

Writing Backstories

When writers choose characters for their books or plays, they create something called a backstory for each character. Readers want to know where fascinating characters came from, and for the writer that means exploring and imagining events and information about that character that can be woven into the story or play. This gives us, the reader/viewer information about the character that helps us *to care about them and understand situations*.

The Prince and his Valet, Crantini, appear in the story of Cinderella without us ever having received any background information on these characters. We know about Cinderella's history – her mother died and that is how she came to be living with a stepmother, we know her real name is Lucette and we see her family and where she lives. We don't know any details of the Prince's life or of Crantini's, his valet.

Write a character backstory about the Prince or the Valet including such details as:

1. Where were they born and where they spend their childhood? Who were their parents, family?
2. What kinds of things did they like to do?
3. What is their basic personality?
4. What events have happened in their life leading up to where our story starts?

Were there any major events or tragedies that happened that help explain who they are in the story?

All grades

Fairy Tale Comparative Study

Fairy Tales are fictional stories that contain a moral lesson. Often they are told to children as a way of teaching lessons in an enjoyable and memorable way without lecturing them! The fairy tale of Cinderella is one of the most popular in the world and has enjoyed almost continuous popularity since it was printed by Charles Perrault in 1697. It was popularized by the Brothers Grimm and, more recently, by the Disney animated movie. However, the story exists in many different forms in different cultures from around the world.

Here are several of these versions. When you read these summaries, you see how different elements of the popular tale we know originated and came to us from various sources and times, creating the fairy tale we now know as Cinderella. These varying tales highlight how, depending upon the specific culture of origin, the surrounding elements can change.

Discuss with the class what the elements might be from a variety of different cultures, either ones that you choose, or possibly the cultural backgrounds of the children in the class.

YEH-SHEN (860 AD China)

Yeh-Shen is an orphan living with her stepmother and stepsister in a cave. The stepmother kills her only friend, a golden-eyed fish, and serves it for supper. A wise man tells Yeh-Shen to save the fish bones as they will help her in the future. A festival is announced, a celebration where everyone can find their love match. She asks the magic bones for a beautiful jeweled gown to wear to the festival, and suddenly finds herself majestically adorned, complete with golden shoes. She leaves the festival suddenly when she thinks her stepfamily will recognize her, leaving a golden shoe behind. The shoe eventually comes into possession of the King and he decides that he must find the owner of it. His servants put up a stall by the side of the road, and all the ladies of the land are invited to try the shoe on. One night, Yeh-Shen comes to the stall and takes the shoe. The King's servants arrest her but when they notice how lovely she is, and what tiny feet she has, they accompany her home. There she produces the matching shoe and puts them on. Her rags transform back

into the jeweled robes, and she marries the King. Her stepfamily continued to live in the cave. They finally die in a shower of rocks.

TATTERCOATS (English Folktale)
Tattercoats' grandfather hates her because her mother died giving birth to her. The King comes to town and announces a ball. The grandfather goes to the ball. Tattercoats is not invited, so she runs off to find her friend, the herdboy, who cheers her up with a tune and they walk to town, with his flock of geese, to catch a glimpse of the King's procession. On the way they meet a richly dressed young man, who is lost, and they show him the way to the palace. As he walks with them, the herdboy plays his pipe and the Prince realizes how beautiful Tatter coats is and falls in love with her. He asks her to come to the palace at midnight just as she is, with the herdboy and geese, and he will make her his wife in front of everyone. When she is announced, the herdboy plays his pipe again, and her rags are transformed into a beautiful gown, and the geese are turned into elegant pages to hold up her long train. The King accepts Tattercoats as his daughter-in-law, as she is beautiful and kind. The grandfather has to go back to the draughty castle to live all alone, as he has sworn that he will never look upon his granddaughter's face. Nobody ever saw the herdboy again.

CAP O'RUSHES (English Folktale)
This version of *Cinderella* is a little different in that there is no magic to help her. She transforms herself and uses her cleverness to reveal herself to the master's son. She teaches her father a lesson and forgives him for casting her out for telling the truth.

CINDERELLA (Perrault-French)
This version of the story was used by Disney to create their well-known animation. It is also very close to the story of the opera you will be seeing. Perrault introduced the mice, rats, lizards, and pumpkin to make the coach and horses to take Cinderella to the ball. The ball went on for three whole days and every day she appeared in a new gown. At her wedding, Cinderella forgave her stepsisters and found husbands for them at the court.

CINDERELLA (The Brothers Grimm)
In this version, Cinderella's mother is watching over her, like a good fairy. The stepfamily is very nasty, but the birds help her with her tasks, picking the lentils out of the cinders. The birds also make the dress and shoes. She goes to the ball three times, each time with a different dress. The stepsisters cut their toes and heels off to try to make the shoe fit them, but are discovered when the birds tell the Prince that they see blood running out of the their shoes. At the wedding, the same birds peck out the stepsisters' eyes for being so mean.

RHODOPIS (Modern day re-working of an Ancient Greek tale)
The Egyptian Cinderella is a tale based on the life of a Greek slave girl named Rhodopis. Rhodopis was brought to Egypt from Greece and sold as a slave. She was one of many servant girls, but looked different than the true Egyptian slaves, being that she had fair skin and blonde hair. Her master was kind, but he never saw the way the other slaves treated Rhodopis. The other girls ordered her around as if she was their own personal slave. He master one day gave her a pair of gold slippers so she would not have to go barefoot any longer. All the other girls sailed to Memphis one day because Pharaoh Amasis was having a ball but Rhodopis was not permitted to go with them. On the day the other girls left a falcon, which was the symbol of the god Horus, came and took one of Rhodopis's gold slippers and carried it all the way to Pharaoh Amasis's ball and dropped it in his lap. Amasis took that as a sign and wanted every girl in Egypt to try on the slipper. He traveled all across the country until he finally found Rhodopis and married her.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Familiarizing the students with the musical parts of the opera helps them to engage with the story more completely when they are attending the performance.

Here is a list of songs from Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Massenet's *Cendrillon* in the order in which they appear in our *Cinderella* production. They are all sung in Italian and French, which are the original languages of these operas, so while your students might not understand the words, from these clips they will familiarize themselves with the melodies:

1. Rossini – Duet/Roseola & Rubella

'No, no, no: non v'è chi trinciar sappia così' [No, no, no, no one here knows how to dance like this]

Introduces the two unpleasant step-sisters. In this charming rendition from Pacific Opera Victoria you see the "unpleasant" personalities of the step-sisters emerge: https://youtu.be/fiUoRsL4TUc

2. Rossini – Solo aria/Lucette

'Una volta c'era un re' [Once upon a time there was a king…] This clip from the Met Opera begins with 'Una volta c'era un re' from 0:00 to 1:53, then ffwd to 5:06 to hear selection #3, 'O figlie amabili', or you can listen through:

https://youtu.be/BMnn3r1Iclw

Lucette/Cinderella singing by herself considers her dreams.

3. Rossini – Crantini & Ensemble

'O figlie amabili' [Oh, lovely daughters] (See #2)

Crantini, the Prince's servant arrives at the household with invites for everyone

4. Massenet – Aria/Celeste, Fairy Godmother

'Ah! douce enfant' [Oh, sweet child]

Fairy Godmother greets Cinderella and tells her of the plan to transform her for the ball. This excerpt from the Met in 2018 has English translation as well :

https://youtu.be/Mn0wguVuMbc

5. Massenet – Aria/Prince Albert [Charming]

'Coeur sans amour' [Heart without love]

Prince Albert laments his loneliness at not having found a Princess with whom to share his life. Mathias Vidal sings it here with Opera de Rennes: https://youtu.be/zwBbXYrpHHY

6. Massenet – Duet/Prince Albert [Charming] & Lucette at the ball

'Toi qui m'es apparue' (You, who appeared for me]

Prince and Cinderella consider the mysterious and overwhelming feelings upon having met each other in the midst of the ball. Sung here at the Glyndebourne Festival, with English translation: https://youtu.be/UfCXK-95NuE

7. Massenet – Aria/Lucette – after rushing home from the ball

'Enfin, je suis ici' [Finally, I am here]

Cinderella rushes home making the midnight deadline imposed by the Fairy Godmother. Played here by the Zagreb Music Academy Orchestra: https://youtu.be/4LM0GzfPRT8

8. Rossini – Final 'happy ending' ensemble/Lucette and cast

'Nacqui all'afanno e al pianto' [I was born into pain and tears]

Cinderella forgives her family's prior mistreatment of her and, gathering all about in a final ensemble, offers heartfelt thanks for a happy outcome to the story. This final aria was from a film version of *La Cenerentola* by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle with English translation: https://youtu.be/J67vh5DRURY

***Cinderella* - Calgary Opera School Tour February/March 2023**

NAME: _____

My favourite part of the opera was: _____

_____

Original worksheet provided by Tylene Malkin

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