

The Florentine Opera

CINDERELLA

A glowing blue glass slipper is the central focus of the image. It is positioned diagonally, with the toe pointing towards the bottom left and the heel towards the top right. The slipper is highly reflective, showing bright highlights and a starburst effect at the heel. The background is a deep blue gradient, transitioning from a lighter blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom, with a starry sky effect. The overall mood is magical and ethereal.

Opera
Resource
Guide

A Note to Teachers

Dear Educators,

Welcome! Thank you so much for choosing us to be a part of your school year! We are certain that you will find our program, ***Cinderella***, to be engaging and fulfilling for everyone who sees it! Within this guide we have included a wide range of materials and activities: from general opera studies with corresponding activities, to our featured production, as well as the story of *Cinderella*.

Please feel free to adapt and use any of the suggestions for your classroom discussions and activities. We encourage you to take advantage of our photocopy-friendly format and generate copies for students or other colleagues. We would also like to encourage you to **fill out and return both the teacher and student evaluations**. Student evaluations can come in a variety of forms: artwork, classroom projects, letters, writing samples, etc. Your input is very important to us as we continue to implement arts education in the schools.

In addition to the tour of *Cinderella* at the Florentine Opera this season, we encourage you to look into our other education and community engagement programs. Please visit www.florentineopera.org for more information on GET OPERA, Opera Inside Out, and the Young Singing Actor Intensive!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the performance, the study guide, or the Florentine Opera.

Thanks again and we look forward to seeing you this year!

John A. Stumpff
Education & Community Engagement Manager

Cinderella 2020

Teacher Evaluation Form



The Florentine Opera Company is dedicated to bringing the enjoyment and appreciation of the opera to all audiences and has a particular interest in introducing young audiences to this rich medium.
Thank you for taking a few minutes to share your feedback. Your comments will help in further developing our programs and educational materials.

School name: _____ Performance Date: _____

Your name: _____ Position: _____

Today's Date: _____

Do you have a Music Teacher on Staff: Y/N

Very knowledgeable: ___ Moderate: ___ This was my first experience: ___

Tell us about your opera background: _____

How much classroom preparation time did you spend before the performance?

_____ A Lot _____ Some _____ Little _____ None

Did you receive our Teacher Resource Guide? Y/N

***Did you find the Guide useful?** Y/N

How did your students feel about the performance:

Loved _____ Liked _____ Okay _____ Disliked _____

Please rate the performance length: Just right ___ Too short ___ Too long ___

Would you recommend this program to other educators? Y/N

Have you attended or seen any of the Florentine Opera Company's other educational programs/productions? Y/N

Additional comments about Florentine programming and resources _____

May we call you to discuss *Cinderella* and this evaluation further? Y/N

Telephone number: _____ Best time to call: _____

Please return this form to:
Florentine Opera Company/Attn: John A. Stumpff
930 E. Burleigh St, Lower Level Milwaukee, WI 53212
email forms: jstumpff@florentineopera.org




FOR THE STUDENTS:

KIDS, YOUR OPINION, PLEASE...

Circle the face that best describes how you feel:

1) I enjoyed learning about opera.   

2) I enjoyed the show.   

3) I would like to see another opera.   

Draw a picture of what you liked most about the opera:

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Education Mission

FLORENTINE OPERA COMPANY EDUCATION MISSION

The mission of the Florentine Opera Company Education Department is to make opera more inviting and accessible to communities in Milwaukee and throughout the state of Wisconsin by:

1. Educating students and the community about opera and career opportunities within the opera.
2. Providing opera introduction and continuing education events for adults.
3. Providing opportunities for young artists.

The Florentine Opera Education Department's strategic plan includes four goals:

1. Establishing new forms of partnerships
2. Supplementing arts education at every level
3. Improving the quality and quantity of teaching artists
4. Involving new audiences by developing new, non-traditional venues

"The music makes me feel happy, and it made me go to my home and sing to my grandma." – student at Greenfield Bilingual School

"I learned that it takes a lot of work to be in the opera."
– student at Lancaster Elementary

"With my lifestyle and the way I was brought up, I would have never been naturally introduced to the opera. I can replace movies with the opera, I can relax at the opera, I can get away from the world at the opera." – student at West Bend High School

"I love the performance for 'The Three Little Pigs' opera performance. It was a good show for the children in the school." – student at 53rd Street School

"They made me laugh through the whole show. I think they should come again so we can see another show. All the kids were enjoying it." – student at Honey Creek School

"I really liked the play. My stomach started to hurt because the play was so funny. I thought that the singing was awesome and that the whole performance was wonderful!"
– student at Honey Creek School

New to Opera?

Each section of this guide was created to supplement your curriculum, and also to aid opera newcomers in understanding the art of opera more fully. Many sections are geared specifically towards teachers. You are welcome to take this information and reframe it in whatever way you think would best suit your class. With the information and activities provided in this guide, we hope to help you create a more meaningful experience for your students.

Our objectives with this study guide and performance are...

- To introduce students to the fundamental components of opera.
- To give students a very brief historical perspective of opera's development.
- To introduce some basic terminology.
- To encourage multidisciplinary studies across many subject areas.
- To educate as well as entertain.

- **We achieve these objectives by...**
- Presenting opera as fun, entertaining, and culturally significant.
- Providing you with background information on this year's production as well as some basics about opera and its history.
- Connecting opera to your music and general classroom curriculum with suggested pre and post-opera activities.

- **Why opera education?**
- Our in-school programs present material through visual, aural, and action methods, thus reaching out to many different types of learners.
- Exposure to opera as a multidisciplinary art helps students develop intelligence in a variety of areas, including abstract thinking and problem solving.
- Opera provides opportunities for self-expression through a variety of forms, which in turn leads to the development of valuable communication skills, self-discipline, perseverance, and leadership.
- Opera combines drama, poetry, instrumental music, singing, scenery, costumes, lighting, and many wonderful special effects. Such collaboration is important for students to witness, as it helps to encourage them to develop a broadened, multidisciplinary perspective.



About this Study Guide

Why Being an Opera Novice Helps You Enjoy Opera

We firmly believe that newcomers have a great advantage over many opera fanatics worldwide. The composers of the great operas knew what they were doing – they created potent musical dramas aimed straight for the heart. More than many other art forms, opera is meant to appeal directly to the senses. To fully appreciate an opera, all you need are eyes, ears, and a soul. Let us help you activate your senses!

The Popular-versus-Classical Myth

Until very recently (at least in geological terms), going to an opera was like going to a movie. People went to an opera as you might go to a rock concert: to have fun! They went to see their favorite stars and hear their favorite tunes. They wore casual clothes; they brought along food and drinks; they even cheered (or booed, or threw flowers or tomatoes) during the show if the spirit moved them. Classical music back then *was* pop music.

In fact, when Verdi wrote *Otello*, the crowd went crazy, calling him back to the stage over and over again with standing ovations, finally carrying him all the way home on their shoulders, and then serenading him under his window. Opera is just as entertaining as it ever was. But these days, it has become much less familiar.

~adapted from [Opera for Dummies](#)



What is Opera?

Before defining opera, ask your students to share their ideas about what opera could be. Write “opera” on the board and list their answers beneath it.

What is opera?

An opera is simply a play in which people sing. In most operas, all the words are sung, and none are spoken. There are other types of operas, however, in which there is as much speaking as singing.

If an opera is just a play, then why do people sing?

The theater has been around for hundreds of years. People were being entertained by plays long before television and radio were even invented. Music was added to enhance the feelings that were being portrayed on the stage. Singing is a very special form of music because the instrument (like our feelings) comes from inside. Our voice is a part of us which expresses how we feel, whether we sing, talk, shout, laugh, cry, moan, growl, whisper, gasp, hiss, etc. It is the actor’s job to express such feelings, and singing is a perfect way of doing just that. Naturally, singing was used very early in the history of the theater; however, opera as we know it is only about 400 years old. Opera powerfully combines drama of the theater with music – vocal and instrumental – to create the lasting art form that is enjoyed throughout the world today.

JUST THINK...

From opera to musical theater, to music videos and everything in between – the length of musical performances is considerably shorter today than it was in the past.

How is this a reflection of society today compared to hundreds of years ago? Is it harder for us today to sit through a three-hour-long opera than it was for people back in the 1800s? Why or why not?



Elements of Opera

What Are the Elements that Make Up an Opera?

A **score** is the blueprint to an opera. It consists of the words, music, stage directions, and often performance notes for the entire show. An opera score is often divided into sections. It begins with the **overture**, followed by one to as many as five **acts** (large sections of acting and singing). Each act may be divided into **scenes**. The scenes are made up of **recitatives**, **arias**, **duets**, larger **ensembles**, and **choruses**.



A **trio** from the Florentine Opera's production of Puccini's *Turandot*, November 2011
Photo Credit: courtesy of Kathy Wittman

VOCAB:

Score: The pages upon which the vocal and instrumental music of opera are written.

Overture: An orchestral piece that introduces the opera, often making use of melodies that are heard again during the opera.

Acts: A larger section of the score that consists of smaller sections we call scenes. An opera can have 1 act or as many as 5 acts.

Scenes: The surroundings or location where the action takes place; also a subdivision of an act.

Recitatives: Speech singing that tells the plot line of the opera, imitates natural speech patterns, and is usually heard before an aria.

Arias: A solo vocal song that presents emotions; a showpiece for the singer, usually with rich orchestra accompaniment.

Duets: A musical piece for two instruments or voices.

Ensembles: A group singing or playing together; a piece that a group sings or plays together.

Chorus: A group of singers who sing and act en masse, not as soloists.



VOCABULARY ACTIVITY

Using the terms you just learned, match the word to its correct definition!

Acts

The pages upon which the vocal and instrumental music of opera are written.

Arias

An orchestral piece that introduces the opera, often making use of melodies that are heard again during the opera.

Chorus

A larger section of the score that consists of smaller sections we call scenes. An opera can have 1 or as many as 5.

Duets

The surroundings or location where the action takes place; also a subdivision of an act.

Ensembles

A group singing or playing together; a piece that a group sings or plays together.

Overture

A musical piece for two instruments or voices.

Recitatives

Speech singing that tells the plot line of the opera, imitates natural speech patterns, and is usually heard before an aria.

Scene

A group of singers who sing and act en masse, not as soloists.

Score

History of Opera

A Brief Overview of Opera History

Opera is the complete collaboration of music, drama, dance, art, and poetry. It has been around for more than 400 years and can be broken down into the following musical periods:

Baroque		Classical	Romantic	Modern	Contemporary
1600	1700	1800	1900	20th Century	21st Century

Baroque Period (1600-1725): Opera was created in the early 17th century in Florence, Italy by a group of scholars wanting to emulate the sounds of ancient Greece. By linking existing musical pieces together with sung recitation, they laid the groundwork for what we now know as **Opera**.

This period is known for very **ornate** music (music with added flourishes) and stories about royalty or the gods.

Classical Period (1725-1820): By the eighteenth century the musical drama became the driving force in opera. The most important figure during the Classical Period of opera was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Many of the **libretti** (the text of an opera, usually written by someone other than the composer) he chose reflected the new ideas of the enlightenment that were circulating throughout Europe and the Americas at that time.

This period is known for melodies that are beautiful and easy to hear over a chorded structured harmony. Mozart also expanded the art form's uses of duets, trios, and ensemble singing.

Romantic Period (1820-1900): In the nineteenth century's Romantic Period, opera suddenly fell into categories defined by the nationality of the composer. With this rise of nationalism, every major country in Europe started creating its own unique contributions to the art form.

The three countries with the most influence during this period include Italy, Germany, and France.

Modern Opera (1900-Present) New operas continue to be created around the world and are influenced by world events, literature, as well as other genres of music. In America, composers such as George Gershwin used the sounds of jazz to create his opera *Porgy and Bess*, while Carlisle Floyd was influenced by American literature in his opera *Of Mice and Men*, and John Adams' found inspiration from historic events in his opera *Nixon in China*.



LISTENING ACTIVITY

Listen and compare! Below are examples of operas from the different time periods discussed on the previous page. Describe what you hear, do they sound the same or are there big differences?

Baroque Period Recording example:

Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Soprano Beverly Sills

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qk28jl4lihg>

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* "When I am Laid in Earth" sung by Soprano Jessye Norman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOIAi2XwuWo>

Classical Period Recording example:

Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Act II finale, Ensemble

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxm0lkoSMU4>

Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Trio "Soave sia il vento"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2ESkanjf5s>



LISTENING ACTIVITY

Romantic Period Recording example:

Italian: Puccini's *La Boheme*, "Che gelida manina" Tenor Jose Carreras

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiTHjfmSyQU>

German: Humperdink's *Hansel and Gretel*, duet from Act I

*(please note, the recording is translated into English)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fX-qQh_PQ0

French: Bizet's *Carmen* "Habanera" Mezzo-Soprano Denyce Graves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2V9woZuVIO4>

Modern 20th Century Period example:

Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, "Summertime" sung by soprano Harolyn Blackwell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7-Qa92Rzbn>

Contemporary 21st Century Period example:

Aldridge's *Sister Carrie*, "Everything is Paid For" sung by Mezzo-Soprano Adriana Zabala

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ht7y_SZjRkc

Who makes it happen?

The Creators

- ❖ **The Composer** is the person who writes music to go with the words so that the story can be sung. The composer has a historically important role in Western culture. Both the nobility and the Church respected musicians, and thus provided for the care and livelihood of artists throughout the latter part of the 18th century. Although artists benefited from the personal security of the patronage system, most did not have the freedom to choose the subject or style of their compositions. It was not until the end of the 1700s that the patronage system declined. The rise of the consumer class allowed composers to write music that could be published and sold to the public. The result was an explosion of creativity, in both style and subject, throughout Europe.
- ❖ **The Librettist** creates or adapts a story so that it can be sung. The words of an opera are called a **libretto**, this word comes from the Italian word meaning “little book.” The stories adapted for opera were usually taken from historical events, myths, poems, or plays. Composers often had favorite librettists with whom they worked regularly. Perhaps the most well known librettist was Lorenzo da Ponte (1749-1838) who collaborated with Mozart on three of his most popular operas: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*.



Who makes it happen?

The Artistic Team

- ❖ The **Crew** is a group of people who work together, usually back stage, to make the opera performance happen.
- ❖ The **Stage Director** is responsible for the action on the stage. This is accomplished by working with the singers for weeks before the performances, directing their movements and developing their individual characters.
- ❖ The **Stage Manager** leads the crew and directs all the action that happens backstage. Stage Managers direct scene changes, artists' entrances and exits, sound/light changes, curtain movement, and all other activities that make the production run smoothly. Their job requires great leadership and quick decision-making.
- ❖ The **Conductor**, interprets the music of the opera and rehearses it with the singers and the orchestra. During rehearsal the music is shaped to express different moods of the opera. For example, the conductor decides how fast or slow (tempo) and how loudly and softly (dynamics) the music is played.
- ❖ The **Chorus Master** rehearses the singers of the opera chorus.
- ❖ The **Set Designer** designs the scenery for the opera.
- ❖ The **Lighting Designer** manipulates the lights to create effects that help set the mood and complement the action on stage.
- ❖ The **Costume Designer** creates the clothes that the singers will wear on stage.
- ❖ The **Hair and Makeup Designer** creates the wigs and makeup looks for all the singers on the stage.
- ❖ The **Choreographer** is responsible for creating and directing any dancing that takes place in the opera.

The Performers

- ❖ The **Singers** perform all the roles on (and sometimes off) stage to help tell the opera's **plot** (story).
- ❖ The **Orchestra** is a group of instrumentalists who accompany the singers. They perform in the **orchestra pit**, the sunken area in front of the stage.
- ❖ The **Dancers** dance ballet or other dances that are required for an opera's scene.
- ❖ The **Rehearsal Pianist** accompanies the artists as they rehearse the opera before they rehearse with the full orchestra. This job also entails serving as a coach, assisting the artists with language and musical preparation.

As we can see, the production of a fully staged professional opera requires the commitment of many people willing and able to work together.

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY

Fill in the blanks below with these different opera jobs!

Composer	Librettist	Stage Director	Conductor
Costume Designer	Singers	Orchestra	Choreographer

1) The _____ made all the performers clothes look exactly like the characters from the story.

2) It was fun watching the _____ wave their baton and lead the _____ from the “pit” in front of the stage.

3) Mozart is a famous _____ who wrote the music to 22 operas, 10 of those operas he wrote as a teenager.

4) The _____ created all the dances for the opera and taught all the dancers the movements.

5) Before the music can be made, the _____ writes all the words to tell the story of the opera.

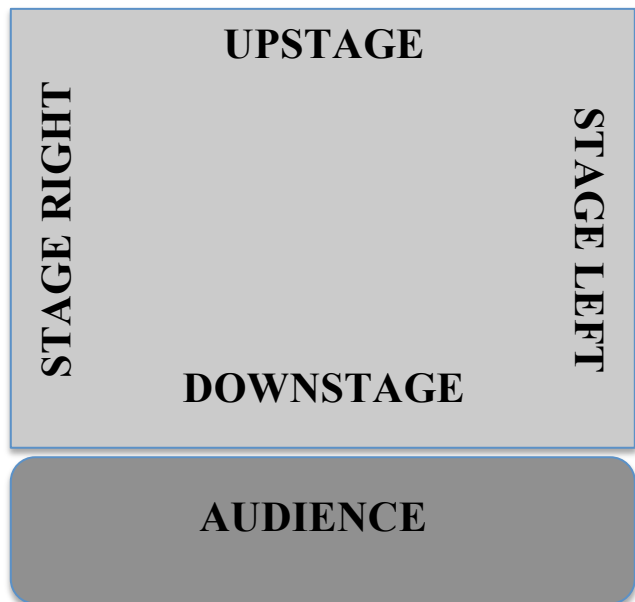
6) The _____ tells all the opera _____ where to move on stage.



1) Costume Designer 2) Conductor/Orchestra 3) Composer
4) Choreographer 5) Librettist 6) Stage Director/ Singers

STAGE VOCABULARY

- ❖ **Audition:** When a singer or actor tries out for a director, hoping to be cast in a show; usually involves singing 2 or 3 contrasting arias and possibly a monologue
- ❖ **Blocking:** Where the singers stand and move during a scene; singers are given their blocking by the director, and have to memorize it along with their music
- ❖ **Costumes:** The clothing the singers wear so that they look like the character
- ❖ **Props:** Items other than costumes or scenery used as part of a dramatic or operatic production, such as a knife, a mirror, or a special glass; short for *properties*
- ❖ **Set:** The scenery, representing a particular location (short for *setting*)
- ❖ **Stage Direction:** Like a map has north, south, east, and west, the stage also has its own language to tell a singer what direction to move. Some of the directions include:
 - **Upstage, Downstage, Stage Right, and Stage Left.** The directions are based on the performers perspective as they look out into the audience



Activity

Now that you know the different elements, people, and directions that make up an opera, have your class create their own opera or play. Have groups of students create a story to tell and make someone in the group the stage director. Have students take turns directing a short scene, try using some of the stage direction terms learned (Upstage, downstage, stage right, and stage left).

4 Main Voice Types

Women

Soprano

A soprano is the highest female voice, with a range similar to a violin or flute. In opera, the soprano most often plays the young girl or the heroine (sometimes called the Prima Donna), since a high bright voice traditionally suggests femininity, virtue, and innocence. The normal range of a soprano is two octaves up from middle C, sometimes with extra top notes.

Famous singers: Leontyne Price, Renee Fleming, Martina Arroyo

Mezzo-Soprano

Also called a mezzo, the Italian word for *middle*, this is the middle female voice, similar to a clarinet in range. A mezzo's sound is often darker and warmer than a soprano's. In opera, composers generally use a mezzo to portray older women, villainesses, seductive heroines, and sometimes even young boys (like Hansel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*). This portrayal of young boys is a special operatic convention, called a "trouser role" or a "pants role." The mezzo's normal range is from the "A" below middle C to the "A" two octaves above it.

Famous singers: Joyce DiDonato, Grace Bumbry, Marilyn Horne

Men

Tenor

The tenor is the highest male voice in an opera. It is similar to a trumpet in range, tone, color, and acoustical ring. The tenor typically plays the hero or love interest in an opera. His voice ranges from the C below middle C to the C above

Famous singers: Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, Rolando Villazón

Baritone/Bass

The baritone/bass is the lowest male voice type. Its sound is close to a bassoon/trombone in range and tone color. In *opera buffa* (comedic opera), the baritone is often the ringleader of the comedy, but in *opera seria* (serious or tragic opera), he is usually the villain. The range is from the G that is an octave and a half below middle C to the G above middle C.

Famous singers: Eric Owens, Thomas Hampson, Bryn Terfel,

LISTENING ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY:

Describe what you hear in the recordings below? What do you hear in their voice that makes you think they are a specific voice type? Are they singing in English? If not, can you tell what language they are singing in?

SOPRANO: Leontyne Price singing Verdi's "Cara Nome" from *Rigoletto*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw1sGS28IRM>



MEZZO- SOPRANO: Marilyn Horne singing Saint Saens' "Mon Coeur s'ouvre a ta voix" from *Samson et Dalia*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwynxOAoKjo>



LISTENING ACTIVITY

TENOR: José Carreras singing Sorozábal's "No puede ser" from *La tabernera del puerto*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TYY8K41mgM>



BASS-BARITONE: Eric Owens singing Mozart's "Non più andrai" from *Le nozze di Figaro*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgJmOa6yoVY>



OPERA CROSSWORD

ACROSS

3. The main vocal line is the _____
4. A piece for four singers
7. A large group of singers
8. A high male singer
9. The speed of the music
10. A piece for a solo singer
12. A high female singer melody
13. The words of an opera

DOWN

1. The clothing worn in an opera
2. The scenery and furniture on the stage
3. A low female singer
5. A piece for two singers
6. A production with acting and singing
7. The person who writes the music
11. When the singer speaks a simple

WORD KEY

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| Soprano | Chorus |
| Melody | Costume |
| Set | Quartet |
| Tenor | Libretto |
| Tempo | Duet |
| Aria | Recitative |
| Composer | Opera |
| Mezzo | |

Answer Key:
 ACROSS: 3. Melody 4. Quartet 7. Chorus 8. Tenor 9. Tempo 10. Aria
 12. Soprano 13. Libretto
 DOWN: 1. Costume 2. Set 3. Mezzo 5. Duet 6. Opera 7. Composer 11. Recitative

Operatically Trained Singing

CHECKLIST: A few things a good opera singer must have...

TECHNIQUE:



Volume

Opera singers train their voices to be heard in large theaters, such as the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, without using microphones. Singers train for years to be able to sing loudly enough to be heard over other soloists, a chorus, and a large orchestra of about 70 instruments.



Stamina

Opera requires the ability to sing for two to three hours or even longer. Opera singers rarely perform on consecutive evenings because they are so physically exhausted by the performances.



Range

Operatic music, as written, requires singers to have a large range – to be able to sing very low notes as well as extremely high notes.

PHYSICAL:



Acting ability

Opera singers don't just stand on stage and sing; they must be able to act, as well. Just like actors in a play, the singers must make the audience believe in their characters. For example, the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* would not be as effective (or scary!) if the singer could not act well.



Healthy lifestyle

The voice is part of the body, so eating right and exercising is important for an opera singer to stay healthy. Maintaining good health also helps ward off getting sick which could make a singer potentially have to cancel shows.

MUSICALITY:



Good Ear

Opera singers train for years to be able to learn a lot of music quickly. In addition to training their voice, singers also train their ears to be able to pick up music quickly.



Familiarity with different languages

Since opera was developed in Europe, most operas are written in languages other than English. A singer must be familiar with the pronunciation of foreign languages as well as the meaning of each word that they sing. It is not unusual for a singer to perform in English, Italian, French, German, or even Russian. As opera continues to be made around the world more languages are added and need to be studied by singers.

Glossary of Opera Terms

Act	A larger section of the score that consists of smaller sections we call scenes. An opera can have 1 act or as many as 5 acts.
Aria	A solo vocal song that presents emotions; a showpiece for the singer, usually with rich orchestra accompaniment
Audition	When a singer or actor tries out for a director, hoping to be cast in a show; usually involves singing 2 or 3 contrasting arias and possibly a monologue
Bass/Baritone	A lowest male voice
Beat	The underlying pulse of a song; what you would clap along with at a concert
Blocking	Where the singers stand and move during a scene; singers are given their blocking by the director, and have to memorize it along with their music
Bravo!	A word that audience members shout when they like a performance – it means “well done” or “great job”
Choreographer	The person who creates the dance routines and special movement in the show
Chorus	A group of singers who sing and act en masse, not as soloists
Chorus master	The person who rehearses the singers of the opera chorus
Composer	The person who writes music to go with the words so that the story can be sung
Conductor	The person who interprets and leads the orchestra and singers with the music of the opera. During rehearsal the music is shaped to express different moods of the opera. For example, the conductor decides how fast or slow (tempo) and how loudly and softly (dynamics) the music is played.
Costume	The clothing the singers wear so that they look like the character they are portraying
Downstage	The position on a stage nearest to the audience; because the “raked stage” prevalent in early opera houses was slanted, the closer a singer came to the audience, the lower the stage was to the ground
Duet	A musical piece for two instruments or voices
Ensemble	A group singing or playing together; a piece that a group sings or plays together

Glossary of Opera Terms

Entr'acte	A piece of music between the acts of an opera; usually signals the beginning of the next act
Finale	The end, usually a grand scene involving as many members of the cast as possible
Harmony	Several notes played and/or sung together, to create a richer sound
Interval	The distance between two pitches
Legato	A smooth manner of playing or singing with no perceptible breaks between notes
Libretto	Italian word for “little book”; the printed text of the opera
Melody	The tune
Meter	The grouping of beats in a piece of music into groups of 2 (duple meter) or 3 (triple meter); meter is sometimes irregular or mixed between groups of 2 and 3
Mezzo-soprano	A medium-to-low female voice
Note	A sound with a specific pitch; eight notes played in a row with a specific pattern of intervals make up a scale
Orchestra	A group of instruments made up of strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion that provides accompaniment for the opera performance
Orchestra Pit	A large space below the stage where the orchestra and conductor are during a performance
Overture	An orchestral piece that introduces the opera, often making use of the melodies that are heard again during the opera
Props	Items other than costumes or scenery used as part of a dramatic or operatic production, such as a knife, a mirror, or a special glass; short for <i>properties</i>
Quartet	A musical piece for four voices or instruments
Recitative	Speech singing that tells the plot line of the opera, imitates natural speech patterns, and is usually heard before an aria
Ritardando	Italian word meaning “slowing down”
Rhythm	The feeling of movement in music

Glossary of Opera Terms

Scene	The surroundings or location where the action takes place; also a subdivision of an act
Score	The pages upon which the vocal and instrumental music of an opera are written
Set	The scenery, representing a particular location (short for <i>setting</i>)
Set designer	The person who decides how to make the stage look like a castle, or a forest, or whatever it should look like for the story; this person usually has assistants that build the set once it has been designed
Soprano	The highest female voice
Stage Director	The person who is responsible for the action on the stage. This is accomplished by working with the singers for weeks before the performances, directing their movements and developing their individual characters.
Stagehand	A person who helps put together and take apart the set; also handles props and scene changes
Stage left/right	The division of the stage from the singer's point of view; for example: a singer moves to stage right, which is the audience's left
Tempo	The speed at which a piece of music is performed
Tenor	A high male voice
Theme	A central melody in a piece of music; in opera, a theme may be associated with a particular character, setting, object, or emotion; this kind of theme is also called a leitmotiv
Timbre	(rhymes with amber) Tone quality or tone color of a voice or instrument
Trio	A musical piece for three voices or instruments
Tutti	Italian word that means "everyone"
Unison	When two or more people sing the same notes and the same words at the same time
Upstage	The position on stage farthest from the audience (see downstage for further explanation)
Vibrato	Vibrating quality that produces warmth of feeling in the human voice

The Story of Cinderella

Cinderella is a folk tale dating back as far as 7BC in ancient Greece with a version titled *Rhodopis*. The story has since been adapted thousands of times and by countries around the world. Variations aside, it tells of a protagonist being unjustly oppressed, overcoming their struggles, and ultimately being rewarded.

Florentine Opera's retelling of *Cinderella* structures itself after the plot most widely known in the English-speaking world, by French writer Charles Perrault. The opera will weave the plot through the scenes from the many *Cinderella* operas using their original languages.

While not using every character or elements of Perrault's work, his plot (version below) is a great way to get students familiar with the story before the opera. Explore other versions of this classic story and have students compare and contrast to find what they think is the "best" *Cinderella*.

Cinderella: Version by Charles Perrault

A wealthy widower has a beautiful young daughter, a girl of unparalleled kindness and sweet temper. The gentleman marries a proud and haughty woman as his second wife. She has two daughters, who are equally vain and selfish. The girl is forced into servitude by her stepmother, where she is made to work day and night doing menial chores. After the girl's chores are done for the day, she curls up near the fireplace in an effort to stay warm. She often arises covered in cinders, giving rise to the mocking nickname "Cinderella" by her stepsisters. Cinderella bears the abuse patiently and does not tell her father, who would have scolded her.

One day, the Prince invites all the young ladies in the land to a royal ball, planning to choose a wife. The two stepsisters gleefully plan their wardrobes for the ball, and taunt Cinderella by telling her that maids are not invited to the ball.



As the sisters depart to the ball, Cinderella cries in despair. Her Fairy Godmother magically appears and immediately begins to transform Cinderella from house servant to the young lady she was by birth, all in the effort to get Cinderella to the ball. She turns a pumpkin into a golden carriage, mice into horses, a rat into a coachman, and lizards into footmen. She then turns Cinderella's rags into a beautiful jeweled gown, complete with a delicate pair of glass slippers. The Godmother tells her to enjoy the ball, but warns her that she must return before midnight, when the spells will be broken.

At the ball, the entire court is entranced by Cinderella, especially the Prince. At this first ball, Cinderella remembers to leave before midnight. Back home, Cinderella graciously thanks her Godmother. She then innocently greets the stepsisters, who had not recognized her earlier, and talk of nothing but the beautiful girl at the ball.



Another ball is held the next evening, Cinderella again attends with her Godmother's help. The Prince has become even more infatuated with the mysterious woman at the ball, and Cinderella in turn becomes so enchanted by him she loses track of time and leaves only at the final stroke of midnight, losing one of her glass slippers on the steps of the palace in her haste. The Prince chases her, but outside the palace, the guards see only a simple country girl leave. The Prince pockets the slipper and vows to find and marry the girl to whom it belongs. Meanwhile, Cinderella keeps the other slipper, which does not disappear when the spell is broken.

The Prince tries the slipper on all the women in the kingdom. When the Prince arrives at Cinderella's home, the stepsisters try in vain to win him over. Cinderella asks if she may try, but the stepsisters taunt her. Naturally, the slipper fits perfectly, and Cinderella produces the other slipper for good measure. Cinderella's stepfamily pleads for forgiveness, and Cinderella agrees. Cinderella had hoped her step-family would love her always.

Cinderella married the Prince as her stepsisters are married to two handsome gentlemen of the royal court.

Activity: Design the Costumes

As a costume designer, your job is to bring a story to life through the clothes each character wears. Florentine Opera's Costume Designer Mel Benson studies fashion history and the story to come up with her designs. One of the biggest challenges for creating costumes for *Cinderella* was in creating the relationships between characters through clothing. Notice how the ball costumes of Cinderella and the Prince compliment each other? The other fun challenge was creating a look for Cinderella that good magically turn into a beautiful gown... how do you think Mel did it?

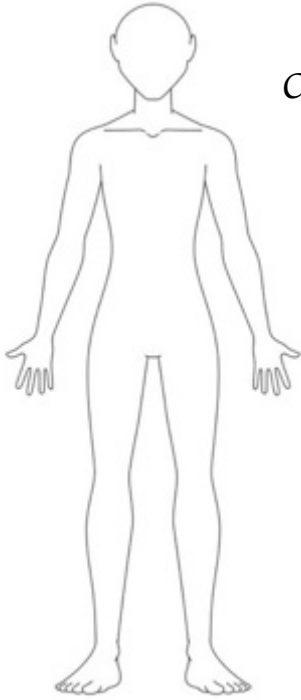
Before showing the students these looks, have your students design the looks for characters from *Cinderella*. Compare the designs with each other and with Mel's designs. The awesome part of theater and opera is that a new design makes a retelling of an old story new again.

(Blank shapes for the students to design there looks are on the following page)

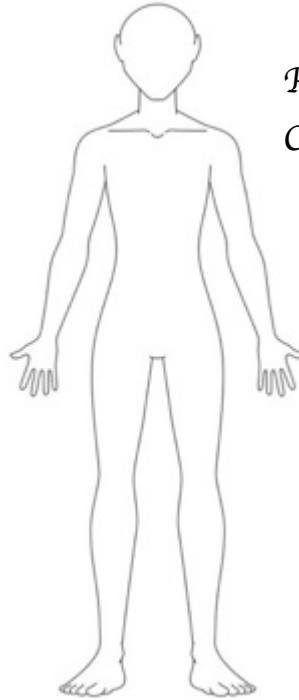


Activity: Design the Costumes

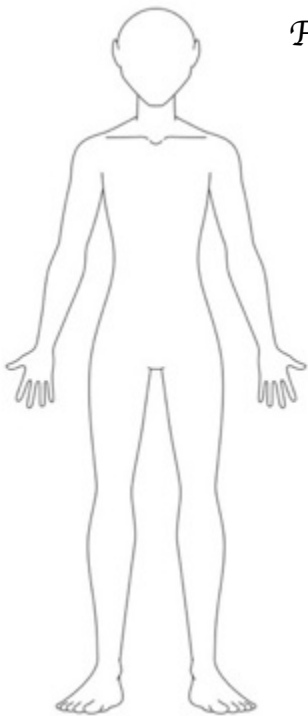
Design the costumes for each character from *Cinderella*.



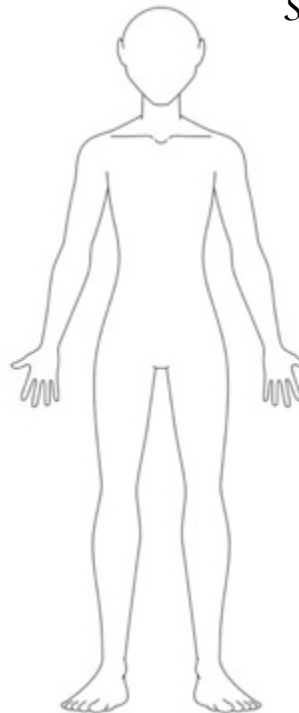
Cinderella



*Prince
Charming*



Father



Step-Sister

Meet the Cast

We asked the big questions you wanted to know about the cast of *Cinderella!*



Kathryn Henry: Soprano playing Cinderella

Where are you from? Sheboygan, WI

Where have you sung/performed? 5 different states, Germany, Italy, and Japan

What's your favorite food? Any kind of Pasta!!!

What's your favorite holiday? All of them!

What do you do for fun? Cooking, Go to dinner with my friends, play tennis, and go hiking.

Do you play any instruments? Piano and Bassoon

Do you have any pets? 2 dogs and 2 cats

Interesting fact about yourself? I can juggle!



Meghan Folkerts: Mezzo Soprano playing stepsisters Tisbe/Clorinda & the Godmother

Where are you from? Scottsdale, Arizona

Where have you sung/performed? Seattle Opera, Seattle, WA; Seagle Music Colony, Schroon Lake, NY; Shreveport Opera, Shreveport, LA; Opera in the Ozarks, Eureka Springs, AR; Indiana University Opera Theatre, Bloomington, IN; Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, WI

What's your favorite food? It's a tie between Thai Green Curry and Chicken Flautas!

What's your favorite holiday? Christmas! It's the best time of the year! :)

What do you do for fun? I love to lift weights, go to the rock climbing gym, and come up with yummy recipes!

Do you play any instruments? I played the flute up through undergrad, and I play a little piano.

Do you have any pets? I don't have any pets, but my husband really wants a dog!

Interesting fact about yourself? I've lived in 8 different states in the past 4 years! (Indiana, Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, New York, Arizona, Washington, and Wisconsin)



Luke Selker: Tenor playing the Prince

Where are you from? I am from Appleton, WI

Where have you sung/performed? All over the United States, as well as in Spain and France!

What's your favorite food? My favorite food is pizza

What's your favorite holiday? I love Christmas!

What do you do for fun? I read about science and technology, I think it's incredibly interesting.

Do you play any instruments? I play the piano, and a little bit of guitar.

Do you have any pets? I have a little 12 lb dog, she is a poodle-mix and her name is "Lacey"

Interesting fact about yourself? I have a HUGE head, I am in the 99th percentile for cranial circumference! One-size-fits-all almost never fits me!

Meet the Cast



Samuel James Dewese: Baritone playing Dad

Where are you from? I am originally from Evanston, Illinois, which is right outside Chicago.

Where have you sung/performed? I have been very lucky to perform in places near and far, including Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, London, Paris, Germany, Romania, Spain, and China.

What's your favorite food? My favorite food is the Polish dumplings called pierogi.

What's your favorite holiday? My favorite holiday is definitely Thanksgiving.

What do you do for fun? I love to read! I also like to go out in nature, so things like hiking in the forest, swimming at the beach, and long walks in the countryside.

Do you play any instruments? I play the tenor saxophone!

Do you have any pets? I do not have any pets because I travel a lot when I'm singing, but my parents have a dog and I love to play and cuddle with her when I visit the family.

Interesting fact about yourself? In high school, I was on the varsity diving team. We were second in the state of Illinois!



Leticia Broetto: Pianist

Where are you from? I am from Brazil. My hometown, Botucatu, is located in the mountains. The name originates from Tupi, a language spoken by the natives, and means "Good Wind".

Where have you sung/performed? I have performed in a variety of venues, from coffee shops and churches to concert halls, in Brazil and in the US.

What's your favorite food? I love Italian food, especially pasta dishes.

What's your favorite holiday? Christmas. In Brazil it is the holiday when we gather family and close friends to celebrate and eat great food, similar to what Thanksgiving represents in the US, and it brings back good memories.

What do you do for fun? In my free time I like to have some alone time where I can read books, watch movies, listen to music, cook, go for long walks and see some nature. But also love to have a good time with friends, eat some good food, and go to concerts.

Do you play any instruments? Currently I only play the piano, but I used to play clarinet and percussion in a marching band during high school.

Interesting fact about yourself? I am the only musician in my family and had a late start to my musical studies. Before that, I always assumed I would pursue a career in science.

About the Florentine Opera

We've been bringing a little bit of the world to Milwaukee since 1933.

Our Mission:

The Florentine Opera Company is driven to produce the full range of operatic works reflecting the highest musical and theatrical standards, and to support community and education programs that foster the current and next generation of opera audiences and practitioners.

The Florentine Opera Company is Wisconsin's oldest fully professional performing arts organization and the sixth-oldest opera company in the United States. The company presents three operatic productions per season at the Marcus Center in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In addition, the Florentine presents its @ *The Lueders Center series* at our home in Milwaukee's Riverwest Neighborhood.

The Florentine Opera was founded in 1933 by John-David Anello. At that time, the group was called the Italian Opera Chorus, and it met at the Jackson Street Social Center. In 1942, the group became The Florentine Opera Chorus, remaining under the direction of John D. Anello. He explained that the change in name "was to honor the birthplace of opera as we know it. The craft originated in the Italian city of Florence, which has been known as a bustling center for the arts for many centuries." By this time, the chorus had grown to a group of 100 members of many nationalities, with a waiting list of over 100 more. In the program of the first "Opera Album" after the name change is written the Florentine Opera Chorus motto: "If our song has stopped one heart from aching, we have not lived in vain."

In 1950, the Florentine Opera Chorus extended its efforts from operatic choral performances to the production of complete operas and the company became a private venture, changing its name one final time to the Florentine Opera Company. The Florentine Opera Company is a member of Opera America. Our performances range from Baroque gems with period instruments to world premieres.

Florentine Opera's Education Program

Florentine Opera Company education programs reach a broad spectrum of individuals throughout Metro Milwaukee, southeastern Wisconsin and beyond. Each year the Florentine Opera is committed to serving the Greater Milwaukee area with arts programming. Last year, nearly 30,000 students and individuals benefited from Florentine Opera programs. These programs provide a vital addition to local arts education—both in the classroom and on the stage. Our in-school programs introduce elementary, middle and high school students to the fundamentals of opera and the opportunities that exist within the field of opera.

The Florentine Opera Company Education Department is committed to providing educators with opportunities to utilize opera to meet educational standards, as well as to enhance learning for all students.

WEBSITES FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS

Opera Websites

www.florentineopera.org F Florentine Opera Company website

www.operaamerica.org/notes F OPERA America Website. Find research and countless other resources here.

www.lincolncentereducation.org F Lincoln Center Education. Learn about Capacities for Imaginative Learning

Arts in Education Websites

www.aep-arts.org - Arts Education Partnership website. Support for arts in the classroom.

www.kennedy-center.org/education - The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

www.aate.com - American Alliance for Theatre and Education.

www.theperformingartsalliance.org - Founded in 1977. Advocates for the performing arts.

www.americansforthearts.org - Americans for the Arts.

www.namfe.org - National Association for Music Education.

www.exploratorium.edu/music - Interactive website for music and science.

www.juliantrubin.com/topicprojects/musicprojects.html - Music-centered science projects and experiments. Topics, Ideas, Experiments, Reference Resources and Sample Projects

**The
Florentine
Opera**