



West Bay Opera Association
The Holt Building
221 Lambert Avenue
Palo Alto, Ca. 94306



West Bay Opera's Condensed Version of *Cinderella*

Following is a brief description of the story of Rossini's *Cinderella* as it will be presented in your school. The story line remains the same as the full version of the opera, although it has been condensed. The music of the complete opera runs over two hours, in addition to intermissions. West Bay Opera's condensed version lasts 40 minutes.

Cast:

Cinderella (mezzo-soprano) sung by Kindra Scharich and Nicole Takesono
Prince Ramiro (tenor) sung by Brian Thorsett and Andy Truett
Dandini, the Prince's servant (baritone) sung by Michael Taylor and Mark Hernandez
Don Magnifico, Cinderella's stepfather (comic bass) sung by Mark Hernandez and Paul Thompson
Pianists -- Veronika Agranov-Dafoe, Baker Peeples, and Michael Touchi

Student Volunteers:

Clorinda (Cinderella's stepsister)
Tisbe (Cinderella's stepsister)
Alidoro (Prince Ramiro's wise old tutor)
Herald (a royal messenger)
Three Footmen (stage crew)

Introduction: The performance opens with a brief introduction of the characters, and musical examples illustrating Rossini's fast-paced music.

Story: The story is somewhat different from the familiar fairy tale or the Disney version. Rossini wanted the characters to be real, with no magic. In the opera there are no pumpkins turning into carriages, no mice turning into footmen, etc.

The first scene takes place at the slightly shabby house of Don Magnifico. As the opera begins, **Cinderella** is by the fireside, singing a favorite song about a king who chose a bride (“*Long ago there lived a king*”), not for her beauty, but for her simple innocence. Cinderella is treated like a servant in her own home. Her stepsisters **Clorinda** and **Tisbe** enter and yell at her to stop singing that song. A knock is heard at the door, and **Alidoro** comes in. This is the Prince's tutor, now disguised as a beggar. He is secretly searching the kingdom for a bride for the Prince, and he asks the girls for some bread. The sisters want to kick him out, but Cinderella kindly gives him some breadcrumbs.

A **Herald** arrives to announce that Prince Ramiro is on his way here to escort the daughters of Don Magnifico to a fancy ball at the palace, where the Prince will choose his bride (“*Oh, charming daughters of Don Magnifico*”). The sisters are wild with excitement and wake up their father, **Don Magnifico**. Magnifico is upset by this interruption (“*Wretched daughters, shame upon you, I disown*

you!”), until he learns that his daughters have a chance to marry the Prince (“*An ambassador baby, a future M.D.*”).

Prince Ramiro now arrives, but he is disguised as his servant (“*All looks deserted*”). This way, he thinks, he won't get the usual flattery but will see what the girls are really like. He meets Cinderella and is charmed by her, as she is by him (“*Something graceful, something enchanted*”). A noise is soon heard, and the Prince's servant **Dandini** enters. He is dressed as the Prince, and is enjoying playing the role to the hilt (“*Like the bee in the budding of April*”). He grandly ushers the sisters to his carriage. When Cinderella says she wants to go to the ball, too (“*A word! Oh, sir, I beg you, beg you listen*”), Don Magnifico cruelly tells her she must stay at home and clean the house.

Alidoro comes in, now dressed as a court official, and announces that the register lists three daughters of Don Magnifico. Cinderella tries to say that she is the third daughter, but Magnifico silences her and tells Alidoro that the third daughter had died (“*Who knows if truth will out?*”). All leave except Cinderella. She receives a note from Alidoro telling her that she will come to the ball after all -- she will be given fine clothes and a coach will take her to the palace, but she must leave by midnight to reach home before her father and sisters.

The next scene takes place in the palace. Prince Ramiro asks Dandini for a report on what the sisters are like (“*Zip it, zip it! Quiet, quiet!*”). Not good, is the answer — they are silly, shallow, vain, and vicious. Clorinda and Tisbe enter and show only scorn for Ramiro, the "servant." Just then the herald announces the arrival of an unknown beauty. It is Cinderella in her fancy dress, and everyone is astonished at her beauty (“*My tongue is tied; I waver*”). Magnifico and his daughters notice a resemblance to Cinderella, but dismiss the idea as nonsense. Chimes are heard — it is eleven o'clock. Cinderella starts to leave, but when Dandini tries to stop her, Cinderella reveals that she doesn't love him — she loves his "servant." Overhearing this, Ramiro is overjoyed and asks her if she really doesn't care about rank and wealth. She only wants a man who is kind and gentle, she answers. The chimes are heard again, and Cinderella runs off, losing a slipper as she leaves. Overjoyed, the Prince picks up the slipper, and tells Dandini that his days playing the Prince are over (“*You play the prince no longer*”). He leaves, as Don Magnifico enters, wanting to know which of his daughters he has selected. Dandini has to tell the old man that he is nothing but a servant (“*Sir, a secret of importance*”). Magnifico flies into a rage at news of this deceit.

The scene returns to Magnifico's house, where Cinderella is again in rags by the fireside, singing her song. A storm is raging outside, and Magnifico returns with Clorinda and Tisbe, all in a bad mood. Soon Dandini and Prince Ramiro enter and find Cinderella. The shoe fits her foot, and the Prince announces she will be his bride. When Magnifico tries to banish Cinderella back to the kitchen (“*Saucy servant!*”), Ramiro angrily denounces him and the stepsisters. Cinderella calms him down and asks him to pardon them (“*Ah, my lord*”). The Prince takes Cinderella with him to the palace, where they will reign together in happiness and prosperity.

We now return to the palace, where Cinderella is now dressed in fine clothes. She tells Magnifico that all she wants is for him to say that she is his daughter. She tells her stepsisters not to cry, but to embrace her. She sings a beautiful song about how she was born into sadness and weeping, but a radiant new day has dawned and all her sorrows are past (“*Sad no longer among the cinders*”).