THE ATLANTA OPERA

CREATE. ENRICH. DISCOVER.

Performance Guide



Cinderella

The Remix Opera

A CLASSIC STORY–
UN NUEVO RITMO

THE ATLANTA OPERA STUDIO TOUR

THE ATLANTA OPERA STUDIO TOUR PRESENTS Cinderella The Remix Opera

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Gioachino Rossini

LIBRETTIST
Jacopo Ferretti

ADAPTATION
Ricardo Aponte & Aly Soriano

DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER
Ricardo Aponte

COLLABORATIVE PIANIST
Aly Soriano

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COSTUME DESIGN
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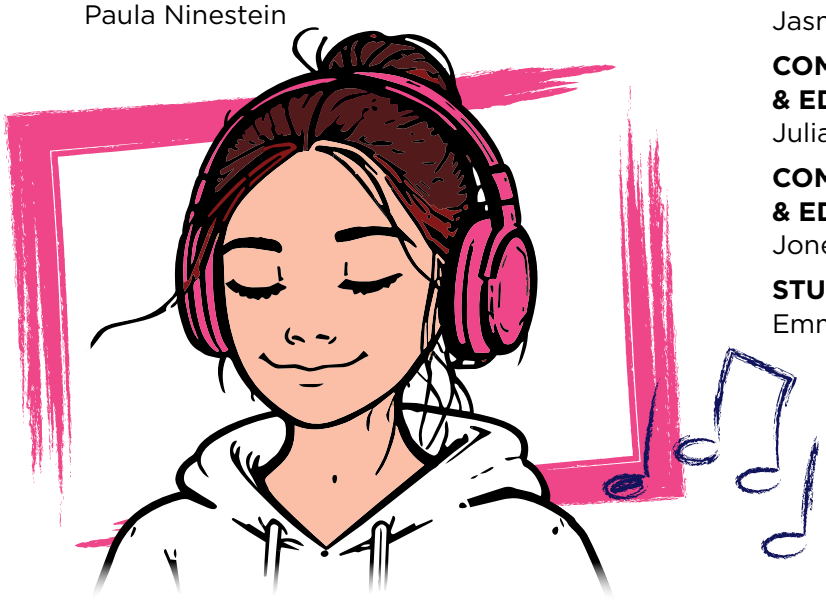
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THE ATLANTA OPERA

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Thank you for welcoming **The Atlanta Opera** to your community! We are thrilled to bring *Cinderella: The Remix Opera* to you and your students. **The Atlanta Opera Studio Tour** was founded in 1980 in an effort to teach students throughout the state of Georgia about opera through live performances and workshops. Over one million students have been introduced to the art form of opera through **The Atlanta Opera Studio Tour**. It is our intention for students to gain introductory knowledge about opera through the performance experience and accompanying educational materials.

This performance guide has been developed to help you and your students explore *Cinderella: The Remix Opera*, as well as to familiarize students with the world of opera (vocabulary, history, etc.). The guide approaches these subjects via a wide range of disciplines, including English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Fine Arts. Our goal is to provide you with an innovative, multidisciplinary approach to teaching required skills and curriculum, including connections to the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

We invite you to check out our **Resource and Activity Guide**, which includes ready-to-print activities, lesson support, and information that connects this performance to both academic and performance standards for every subject. Please feel free to share both resources with educators, caregivers, and community members.

Thank you again for allowing us to share this experience with you. We value your feedback and will take it into account in planning future education programs. We look forward to hearing from you, your students, administration, and/or parents following the performance.

Sincerely,

The Atlanta Opera Education Department
1575 Northside Drive, Suite 350,
Atlanta, GA 30318
404-881-8801 | education@atlantaopera.org

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE ATLANTA OPERA'S *CINDERELLA: THE REMIX OPERA*

- 45-minute opera (English and Spanish) with an optional 5-minute Q&A with the tour company.
- At The Atlanta Opera, we believe that opera is for everyone! We're happy to collaborate on site-specific accommodations, which may include:
  - Full libretto provided in advance to share with interpreters, translators, and anyone else that would benefit from planning ahead
  - Reserved space those needing visual and/or auditory support
  - The Atlanta Opera's "Opera 101" Preparation Video Library
  - The Atlanta Opera Studio Tour social story
  - Sensory warnings
  - Flexible seating depending on venue capacity

Looking for more information on what to expect? Check out our Education Digital library for resources, activities, and lesson plans and our Youtube channel @theatlantaopera to watch our "Opera 101" web series and get a sneak peek about how Cinderella: The Remix Opera came to life!

Atlanta Opera for Educators LinkTree:
https://linktr.ee/TAO.Edu

WHAT IS AN OPERA?

An opera is just like a play, except people sing most of the words. You will immediately notice that opera singers, unlike their peers in pop music, do not use microphones. Rather, an opera singer develops their body as a source of "natural" amplification.

OPERA STEREOTYPES

Opera is boring and stuffy.

Operas tell some of the most interesting, scandalous, and beautiful stories of all time. The performance you'll see today, *Cinderella: The Remix Opera*, incorporates many different artistic mediums—DJ, hip-hop, jaropo, dancing, social media, and even podcasting! Operas are one of the best art forms to fully express BIG ideas, themes, feelings, and stories.

You have to be fancy to go to the opera.

Seeing any performance live is a special time for both audience members and performers. However, you don't need to dress overly fancy or act differently than you normally do. Opera is for EVERYONE!

Operas are long and are in different languages, so it is hard to understand.

The opera you'll see today is around 45 minutes and sung in a mixture of English and Spanish. *Cinderella: The Remix Opera* is based on the 1817 opera, *La Cenerentola*. While *La Cenerentola* is typically sung in Italian, we want to honor those in our community that navigate the world using many languages. Being multilingual like Ella is a superpower!

OPERA ETIQUETTE

Audience members have the most important role in the entire show: to experience the opera! As audience members we can....

Have quiet voices and listen carefully to the performers and teachers in the room.

Raise our hands quietly if called upon to participate or ask a question.

React! Laugh if it is funny! Clap if we liked a song! We can say "BRAVO" or "BRAVA" at the end of the show, which means "great job!"

Have fun! Opera is for everyone!



Young students watching a performance of The Atlanta Opera Studio Tour. (photo: The Atlanta Opera Archives)

BIG IDEAS OF TODAY: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Self-Worth: What are three things you genuinely like about your personality that have nothing to do with what you look like or what you achieve?

Resilience: What does it mean to "bet on yourself"? Where, when, or with whom do you feel the most confident and sure of yourself?

Forgiveness: Is there a time when you had to choose between forgiving someone and "getting back" at them? What did you choose and was it difficult?

Integrity & Honesty: What would be a reason why someone doesn't tell the truth? What does it mean to "be the bigger person"?

Belonging: Have you ever felt like you needed to present yourself differently to fit in? What would make someone present differently when alone versus in public or online?

PRE-SHOW DIALOGUE: VOTE WITH YOUR FEET!

Choose an imaginary line across the room with one end labeled "strongly disagree" and the other "strongly agree." Participants will silently stand anywhere along the line to show how much they agree or disagree with each statement. Encourage a "think, pair, share" to explore the different opinions. After the performance, check into see if anyone's thoughts have changed!

- Goodness is always rewarded.
- Concealing the truth is the same as lying.
- Appearances always matter.
- Forgiveness is more powerful than revenge.
- All problems have a solution.
- Love is life's only true adventure.

#AsíSoyYo | Meet the Characters

Opera singers use many of the same skills that we do in English class! Get to know the characters in this story through the lens of "I AM" and "I WANT." In opera, "I am" statements help artists define character traits, and "I want" statements guide character objectives.

STOP AND THINK

What personal traits do you think describe you best?

What is one of your objectives? We often call them "goals", which can be short-term (like this school year) or long-term (like by the time you grow up)!

	Voice Type	The Lowdown	Character Traits	Objective
ELLA RODRIGUEZ	Mezzo-Soprano	Aspiring DJ who wants to connect with her cultural roots	I AM compassionate and resilient.	I WANT to determine my own future and build a legacy that would make my mom and community proud.
CLAIRE STONEHEART	Soprano	Ella's stepsister	I AM extra yet insecure.	I WANT WANT to be perceived and accepted as "successful."
MR. STONEHEART	Bass-Baritone	Ella's stepfather and Claire's father	I AM bumbling and stubborn.	I WANT to restore my family's reputation and fortune, no matter the cost.
RAMIRO	Tenor	Pop Star famous for wearing a mask	I AM idealistic yet tentative.	I WANT to love and be loved in return for who I really am, not what I have.
KATE	Mezzo-Soprano	Ramiro's best friend and assistant	I AM passionate and loyal.	I WANT to protect and stand by those I love, even when it isn't popular or easy.
GOVERNOR SANTORO	Bass-Baritone	Founder of the Nuevas Voces Scholarship	I AM generous yet firm	I WANT to be trusted and respected as a leader.



Pictured above is Gioachino Antonio Rossini, in 1865. (Image: Published in the U.S. before 1923 and public domain in the U.S. Source: Wikimedia. Original photograph: Étienne Carjat)

Gioachino Rossini was born on February 29, 1792, in Pesaro, Italy to an opera singer mother and horn player father. He spent his childhood running wild with little formal education, so in 1802, his parents settled in Bologna, so Gioachino could study music (mainly voice, violin, and viola) and compose. At 14, he formally entered the music Conservatory in Bologna and composed his first full drama serio, *Demetrius and Polybius*. After leaving for financial reasons in 1806, he never formally continued his training.

Rossini's first paid composition was a one-act comic opera for a theatre in Venice. *La cambiale di matrimonio* (*The Marriage Contract*), written in less than a week, earned him one hundred dollars- an enormous sum for the 19-year-old Gioachino! He ended up composing five operas in one year!

In 1816, Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*) first premiered in Rome under a different name. Opening night was a major flop, with people tripping, nosebleeds, and an unexpected cat onstage!

Luckily, that didn't bring him down! That December, Rossini was contracted to write an opera for the Teatro Valle in Rome. He teamed up with librettist **Jacopo Ferretti**, who was known for his mastery of improvisation and ironic social commentary. After Ferretti's original concept was turned down by a theatre's censor, Rossini, Ferretti, and the theatre manager stayed up all night coming up with one idea after another until Rossini approved Cinderella. Ferretti immediately got to work, writing the libretto in just 22 days!

Cinderella stories had been floating around Europe (and all over the world!) for a while at that point. In 1697, French writer **Charles Perrault** published *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé* (*Stories or Tales from Past Times*), which included "Puss in Boots", "Sleeping Beauty", and "Cendrillon", which started the Cinderella craze in Europe.

Rossini and Ferretti's version, eventually titled *La Cenerentola* liberally borrowed from **Nicolas Isouard** and **Charles-Guillaume Etienne's** 1810 opera *Cendrillon*. Rossini and Ferretti made several major departures from Perrault and Isouard's versions. They wanted to emphasize human charity and humility, rather than success from magic/supernatural forces. As a result, *La Cenerentola* has a distinct lack of magic and instead the characters are more relatable to a contemporary audience- obtaining goodness through their own means.

La Cenerentola debuted at the Teatro Valle on January 25th, 1817, and gradually became one of Rossini's most beloved works. Rossini kept going, eventually writing 32 operas by the time he was 32! His last major opera, *Guillaume Tell* (*William Tell*) debuted in Paris in 1829. A special dessert dedicated to Rossini and *William Tell* (an apple tart decorated with an apple pierced by a sugar arrow alongside a sugar crossbow) was served on opening night. Delicious treats followed Rossini throughout the rest of his life. While he retired from composing after *William Tell*, he turned his attention to cooking and other cultural affairs. He gave his name to many dishes that we enjoy today!

Rossini passed away at the age of 76 on November 13, 1868. His fortune supported his wife, **Olympe Pelissier**, and the creation of the Rossini Music Conservatory, which is still open and enrolls around 900 students each year.



The Atlanta Opera's poster image for *La Cenerentola* from 2018. (Photography: Jeff Roffman | Graphic Design: Matt Burkhalter)

While scholars disagree about the exact number, it is believed that there are over 1,000 variations of Cinderella from around the globe. While each one differs in setting or plot details, the basic outline is the same: a young person is mistreated. Despite the cruelty, the hero remains kindhearted and modest. A valuable prize is put before the family and people scheme to win it. Finally, the hero, with the help of animal or human friends, triumphs and receives the prize.

How can one fairy tale appear in so many different cultures? Fairy tales are one category within the larger genre of folklore, which includes myths, legends, music traditions, oral history, proverbs, and traditional beliefs specific to a culture. Even though different communities are separated geographically, fairy tales are fueled by universal themes and experiences that bring Cinderellas around the globe together!

THE AMERICAS

The Rough-Face Girl
by Rafe Martin (Alogonquin Nation)

Smoky Mountain Rose: An Appalachian Cinderella
by Alan Schroder (United States)

Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella
by Robert D. San Souci (Martinique)

Estrellita de oro: A Cinderella Cuento Retold in Spanish and English
by Joe Hayes, Gloria Osuna Perez, and Lucia Angela Perez (Mexico)

Domítíla
by Jewell Reinhart Coburn (Mexico)

AFRICA

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters
by John Steptoe (Zimbabwe)

Chinye: A West African Folk Tale
by Obi Onyefulu (Nigeria)

Nomi and the Magic Fish: A Story from Africa
by Phumla M'bane (Xhosa people)

Sindi: A Zulu Cinderella
by Desaray Mnyandu (Zulu People)

ASIA

The Little Red Fish and the Clog of Gold
Collected by Inea Bushnaq (Iraq)

Jouanah: A Hmong Cinderella
by Tzexa Cherta Lee and Jewell Reinhart Coburn (Laos)

Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China
by Ai-Ling Louie (China)

The Enchanted Anklet
by Lila Mehta (India)

Abadeha: A Philippine Cinderella
by Myna de la Paz (The Philippines)

Kao and the Golden Fish
by Cheryl Hamada (Thailand)

EUROPE

Raisel's Riddle
by Erica Silverman (Poland)

The Irish Cinderlad
by Shirley Climo and Loretta Krupinski (Ireland)

Kari Woodencloak
by Peter Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe (Norway)

STOP AND THINK

What is a story that is commonly told in your household? Do different people tell it or remember it differently?

Opera is a dramatic story told through song. Considered by many to be an all encompassing art form because it combines all of the elements of art, words, music, drama and dance. The earliest Italian operas were called by several names, such as "favola in musica" (fable in music) and "drama per musica" (drama by means of music). This last title is very close to the dictionary definition, and is the correct basis for any discussion about opera.

The unique thing about opera is the use of music to convey an entire story/plot. This is based on the feeling that music can communicate people's reactions and emotions better than words (read or spoken) or pictures. Opera takes any type of dramatic story and makes it more exciting and more believable with the help of music. Many famous stories have been made into operas, including *Cinderella*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The concept of opera was developing many years before the first opera was written. Its beginning can be traced to the ancient Greeks. They fused poetry and music, creating plays that incorporate song, spoken language and dance, accompanied by string or wind instruments.

In the 1100s the early Christian church set religious stories to music, a style known as liturgical drama. The first true opera, *Daphne* (1597), was composed by **Jacopo Peri**. It told the story of a Greek myth.

The first great composer of opera was **Claudio Monteverdi**. Some of his operas are still performed today.

German composer **Christoph Gluck**'s most famous opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), marked a shift in importance from the performers to the drama. It also reduced the amount of recitative and laid the foundations for the progression of the art form.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was another prolific composer during this time and many of his operas like *Le nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro* - 1786) and *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute* - 1791) are still frequently performed around the world.



The Atlanta Opera's 2018 mainstage production of *La Cenerentola* with Emily Fons as Angelina, and Santiago Ballerini as Ramiro. (photo: Raftermen)



OPERA AROUND THE GLOBE

Italy was the first country where opera became popular and was home to early composers like Jacopo Peri and Claudio Monteverdi. It wasn't until the late 19th century andearly 20th century with the later works of Verdi and the operas of Puccini that a balance was achieved between the role of the orchestra and that of the singer. These two forces were combined to give a more effective presentation of the story. Opera soon spread across Europe, with France and Germany becoming major producers as well.

French opera became known for its visual spectacle, especially incorporating elaborate ballets. Verdi had to add ballets to all his works to get them performed in Paris. German opera, inspired by Italian and French styles, sought to explore deeper philosophical themes. In fact, one of the greatest German opera composers, **Richard Wagner**, chose legends or myths for most of his opera plots so that he could communicate ideas as well as story.

Outside of Europe, China's Peking Opera combines traditional music, drama, singing, acrobatics and visuals. South Africa and Japan have also arisen as major opera hubs with dedicated audiences and performances featuring major names in the field. In North America, opera evolved through both classical European influences and homegrown styles, with major companies and new works emerging in the 20th century. In South and Central America, opera was introduced during colonial times and later adapted to include indigenous stories, rhythms, and languages. Across the globe, contemporary composers continue to shape unique operatic voices that reflect the diverse identities of their regions, attracting new audiences through the accessibility of opera in languages like English, Spanish, Czech and indigenous dialects.

DIFFERENT STYLES OF OPERA

OPERA SERIA Serious opera. These stories are often tragic, and typically involve heroes and kings or ancient myths and gods. *Giulio Cesare* (*Julius Caesar* - 1724) by **George Frideric Handel** is a classic example of opera seria.

OPERA BUFFA Comic opera, typically sung in Italian. The jokesters in these operas are typically from the working class, such as maids, peasants, or servants, who keep busy getting the best of their employers. *Il Barbiere Di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville* - 1816) by Gioachino Rossini is an amusing example of opera buffa.

SINGSPIEL or "Sing Play," evolved in German speaking countries out of the comic opera tradition. It includes elements of comic opera, spoken dialogue interjected among the sung phrases, and often, an exotic or fanciful theme. Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute*) 1791 is an example of this style.

BEL CANTO This Italian phrase means "beautiful singing". These operas grew from a style of singing emphasizing long phrases, breath control and flexibility in singing both loudly and softly. *Norma* (1831) by **Vincenzo Bellini** is a popular example of bel canto.

MUSIC DRAMA A style of opera that is created by a single artist who writes both the text and the music to advance the drama. This style fuses many art forms, and makes each one as important as the others. *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyries* - 1870) and other operas by Richard Wagner defined this style.



The Atlanta Opera's mainstage production of *The Barber of Seville* at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. (photo: Ken Howard)



Soprano Talia Aull and Mezzo-Soprano Isabella Chaney use their math, language, and singing skills to prepare for the Atlanta Opera's 2025 96-Hour Opera Project at Morehouse College. (photo: Raftermen)

Like Ella, you don't have to wait until adulthood to pursue a life in the arts! Many fine arts professionals major in the arts in college (like the artists you will see onstage today) or participate in assistantships or trade programs to build their skills. Today, however? From the classroom to the court, your future in the arts is everywhere you look!

STOP AND THINK

Think about your favorite subject in school. Try to brainstorm ways to connect it to a future goal or something you're passionate about.

Do you like MATH?
You can be a MUSICIAN!
Mathematics provides a framework for understanding and organizing musical elements like rhythm, harmony, and melody. Learn more about how rhythm and melody go hand in hand with fractions and patterns:
https://tinyurl.com/musiciansandmath

Do you like LANGUAGES?
You can be a SINGER!
Operas have traditionally been in different languages like Italian, French, German, and Spanish! Opera singers get a taste of everything! Practice how singers use multiple languages, like in *The Bilingual Barber of Seville*:
https://tinyurl.com/barbertranslations

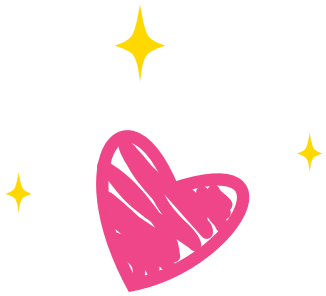
Do you like ART?
You can be a DESIGNER!
To create the visual elements of an opera, designers use many art skills like sewing, drawing, painting, and model making. Explore lessons guiding designs from an idea to a piece of art from:
https://tinyurl.com/operaandart

Do you like WRITING?
You can be a LIBRETTIST!
Librettists write the story, script and lyrics for operas, musicals, and ballets. Meet the librettist of The Atlanta Opera's *Yardbird*, **Bridgette Wimberly**:
https://tinyurl.com/librettistwimberly

Do you like SOCIAL STUDIES?
You can be a DIRECTOR!
Directors often draw inspiration from historical events, figures, and movements to develop compelling narratives. Meet the director of The Atlanta Opera's *The Pirates of Penzance*, Seán Curran:
https://tinyurl.com/directorcurran

Do you like SCIENCE?
You can be a TECHNICIAN!
Digital programming is at the core of making technical effects happen on stage- from lighting, to sound, to special effects. Experiment with these free digital lighting programs to explore how lighting designers use their STEM thinking stills every day:
https://linktr.ee/mattkizerlightinglab

Do you like GYM?
You can be a CHOREOGRAPHER!
Dancers are athletes, too! Choreographers are like coaches to prevent injury and create group formations. Many athletes also take dance classes! See how athletes use dance in their training **https://tinyurl.com/operaandsports** and meet an Atlanta Opera choreographer, Logan Pachciarz:
https://tinyurl.com/choreologan



In addition to the singers and musicians you see on stage and in the orchestra pit, there are many other people who help bring the show to life!

MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR Leads the musical side of the opera, guiding singers and orchestra for a unified performance; **usually detail-oriented, musically gifted, and collaborative**.

STAGE DIRECTOR Oversees the action on stage and helps singers understand their characters and motivations' **typically creative, empathetic, and good at seeing the big picture**.

CHOREOGRAPHER Designs dance and movement, often using historical research; **expressive, collaborative, and energetic.**

PRODUCTION MANAGER Coordinates between creative ideas and technical execution, by working with the various shops and departments that build the scenery, props and costumes; **often organized, a good communicator, and great at problemsolving**.

ARTS ADMINISTRATOR manages the planning, budgeting, community impact and engagement, and coordination of opera productions to ensure their success; **usually a good communicator, diplomatic, and organized.**

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR Coordinates lighting, scenery, props, and crew to ensure all technical elements work smoothly; **often highly technical, calm under pressure, and a STEM-thinker.**

STAGE MANAGER Runs rehearsals and calls cues during performances to keep the show on track; **usually meticulous, reliable, and a good communicator.**

SET DESIGNER Designs the opera's physical researching history, architecture, color, and space to help tell the story; **typically good at drafting/drawing, spatially aware, and detailoriented.**



The Stage Manager calls cues by monitoring the performance on stage and speaking to other crew through the microphone and headset. (photo: Raftermen)

LIGHTING DESIGNER helps create the mood of each scene with light, shadow, and color in collaboration with the director and set designer; **usually musically intuitive, collaborative, and precise.**

COSTUME DESIGNER Creates wardrobe looks through clothing and character aesthetic choices; **often good at drawing and sewing, a good researcher, and resourceful**.

PROPERTIES (PROPS) MANAGER/DESIGNER Manages and designs all hand-held or movable objects used by singers, researching to find or create realistic, period-appropriate items; **often resourceful, thinks outside the box, and a good researcher**.

CREW & STAGEHANDS Includes carpenters and electricians who install sets and handle set and lighting changes during the show; **usually good at following directions, logical, and team-oriented.**

STOP AND THINK

1. Take a look at the characteristics of each job. Based on your skills and talents, what position do you think you would be good at? Why?

2. What other jobs outside of opera are similar to the ones above? Different?

#UnNuevoRitmo | Meet the Team Behind *Cinderella: The Remix Opera*

Many content creators like Ella Rodriguez wear many different "hats": DJs, social media coordinators, composers, video editors, stylists, and even journalists! What if Ella's "All About Music" podcast was real? As a creator interested in all things music production, she would love to connect with some of the artists that helped develop this brand new opera. We sat down with three members of the *Cinderella: The Remix Opera* team, **Ricardo Aponte, Aly Soriano,** and **Jordan Jaked Carrier** to learn about how Ella's world was brought to life.



RICARDO APONTE
Adaptor, Director, & Choreographer

THE ATLANTA OPERA: Describe your job in five words.

RICARDO APONTE: *Create engaging live performance experiences.*

TAO: How did you get into the performing arts?

RA: *My aunt owned a ballet studio in Venezuela, and my mother managed it, so perhaps it was destiny. The performing arts certainly feel like home to me.*

TAO: What excites you most about this piece?

RA: *Creating a unique experience for young audiences by challenging preconceived notions of opera. I wondered, "If I were in middle school, what type of art would keep me engaged and inspired?"*



ALY SORIANO
Collaborative Pianist

THE ATLANTA OPERA: Describe your job in five words.

Aly Soriano: *Play the orchestra on piano!*

TAO: What is something that people may not know about your job?

AS: *When most people think of a classical pianist, they think of someone playing concerts alone on a huge stage, but in reality, most pianists do other things to earn a living—they "wear many hats!" Pianists have many jobs, like teaching, composing, playing in orchestras and bands, and providing worship music. I specialize in the collaborative piano "hat," which means that I often accompany singers, instrumentalists, and choirs.*

TAO: How do you collaborate with other artists?

AS: *I collaborate with the cast by musically directing rehearsals and supporting them when they are on stage. I work with Ricardo so that the music fits the story and dialogue, and I also work with the opera staff to edit and transpose musical parts in the score.*



JORDAN JAKED CARRIER
Costume Designer

THE ATLANTA OPERA: Describe your job in five words.

JORDAN JAKED CARRIER: *Establish persona through visual identity.*

TAO: What inspired your designs?

JJC: *I looked at Gen Z fashion, Bad Bunny, Rococo silhouettes, prep culture, and a lot of embroidery and textiles from India, Mexico, and Venezuela. I looked at the culture she would be immersed in—music, fashion, art, social community, and technology. Ella isn't afraid to be herself, so I also looked to other interpretations of Cinderella to see how we could create a new version of a young woman who is so unashamedly herself.*

TAO: What is something that people may not know about your job?

JJC: *There's so much math involved. I am also an anthropologist and historian. I dive into research and the world around me to truly understand who the characters are and what choices they would make.*

TAO: What advice do you have for a young person wanting to enter the field?

JJC: *Our brains can't create what we haven't seen, so be curious. Be curious about yourself, about the world, and about art. People-watch. Explore. There isn't a singular path to take or a "right" way to cultivate a career in the arts. Ask to shadow artists you admire. Draw every single day, and see as much art as you're able.*

(photos: Raftermen, Jeff Roffman)

Do you sing in a choir or chorus? If so, you're probably already familiar with the different kinds of voice types. While every voice is different and has its own vocal range (how high and low you can sing), we separate voices into five general voice types.
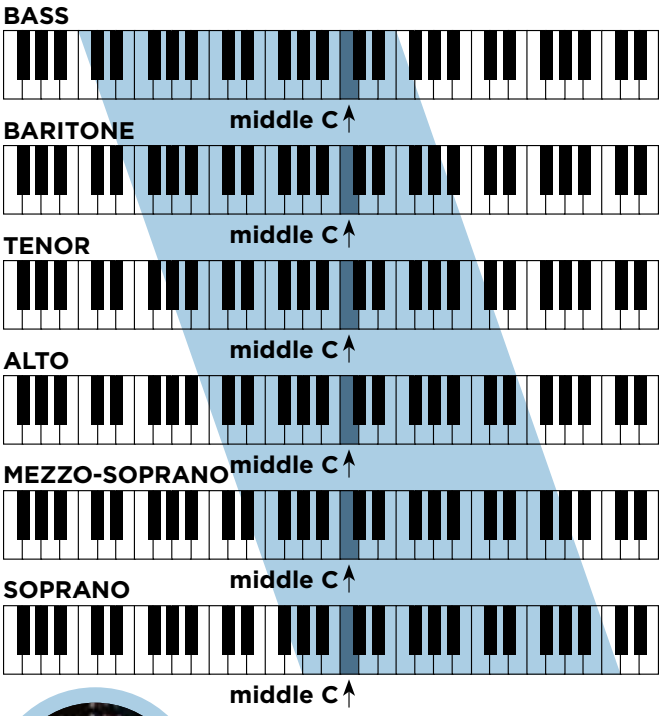
SOPRANOS are the highest voice type, with a range like a violin. In opera, they usually sing roles like the Heroine, Princess, Queen, or Damsel in Distress. Sopranos are usually the female lead in the opera, sometimes called *prima donna*, which means "first lady" in Italian.

MEZZO-SOPRANOS are a middle voice type, with a range right below sopranos. Their sound is darker and warmer than a soprano. They often perform the roles of witches, sisters, maids, and best friends. Mezzos also play young men on occasion, aptly called "pants roles" or "trouser roles," such as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*.

TENORS are known for singing some of the highest notes in the male vocal range. They often sing roles like the hero, the prince, or the boyfriend. They can sound like a trumpet in both range and color. Tenors can be athletic and energetic as well as sensitive and emotional. Their bright, powerful voices often take the spotlight in big moments—and they usually get lots of cheers from the audience!

BARITONES are another middle voice type, fit between choir tenors and basses- not as high as the tenors, but not as low as the basses. They can play both good and bad characters: sometimes they're the boyfriends or brothers—or the ringleader for some comedic shenanigans—but in serious operas they can be the bad guys.

BASSES are another example of a low voice type. They can sound like a bassoon, tuba or low trombone. In a serious opera they can represent age and wisdom (and sometimes evil geniuses), in a comic opera they can make you laugh. Sometimes they steal the show with their super low notes and provide a comforting presence with their warm, rumbly tones.





SOPRANO
Bess from *Porgy and Bess*



MEZZO-SOPRANO
Carmen from *Carmen*



TENOR
Tonio from *Daughter of the Regiment*



BARITONE
Figaro from *The Barber of Seville*



BASS
Don Magnifico from *La Cenerentola*

STOP AND THINK

1. Think of your favorite story, movie or television show. If that story was turned into an opera, what kind of voice types would be best for each of the characters?

2. You can hear different kinds of voice types in popular music too. Think about your favorite singers – do theyhave high voices or low voices? What do you like best about the way they sing?

(photos: Raftermen, Jeff Roffman)

YOUR SENSE OF SOUND: ENERGY & EQUIPMENT

Sound is important to human beings because it helps us to communicate with each other. Your sense of sound also helps you to enjoy music like opera. Musicians use sounds to communicate thoughts or feelings. But what is sound exactly? How do we hear it?

THE ENERGY: HOW SOUND IS MADE

Sound is vibrating air. Sounds can vibrate in different patterns. These patterns are called sound waves. The different patterns change the sound we hear. Listen to traffic on a busy street. Noise like this is disorganized sound. Now listen to a piece of music. Music is sound and silence that is organized into patterns.

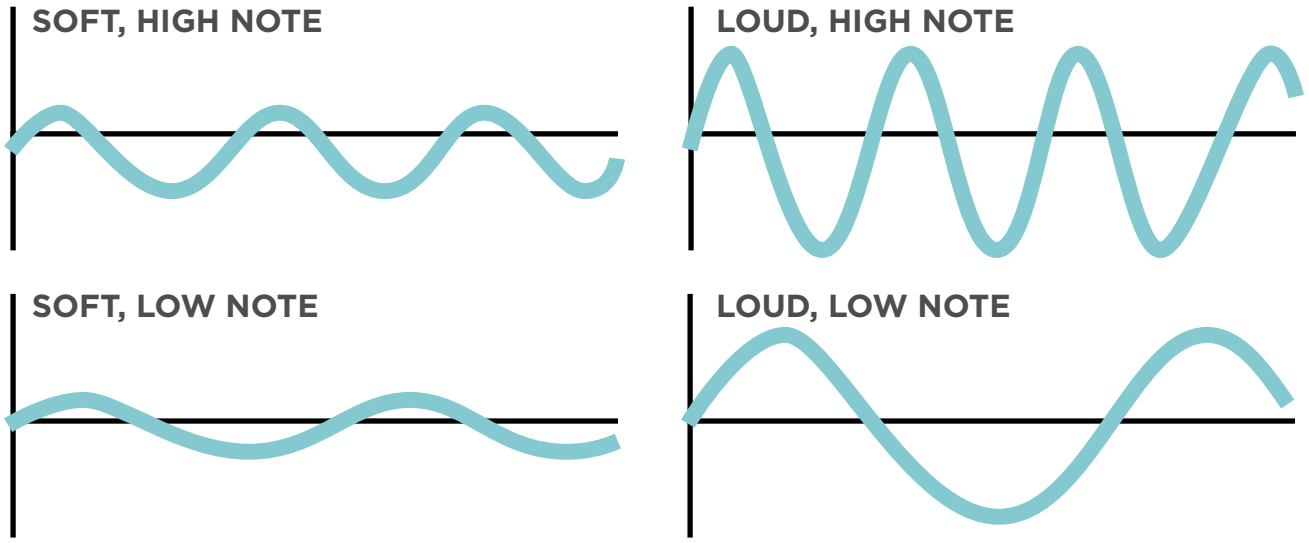
STOP AND THINK

1. How are the sounds of traffic and music different?
2. How does each sound make you feel?
3. Can traffic sound like music?
4. Can music sound like traffic?

Sound waves can vibrate many times in one second. The number of times a sound wave vibrates in one second is called its frequency. The frequency tells how high or low the sound will be. This is called pitch. High-pitched notes vibrate at a fast rate, so they have a fast frequency. Low-pitched notes have a slow frequency.

Just as the speed of the sound wave determines the pitch, the shape of the wave determines how loud or soft the sound will be. This is called volume.

This is what sound waves look like:

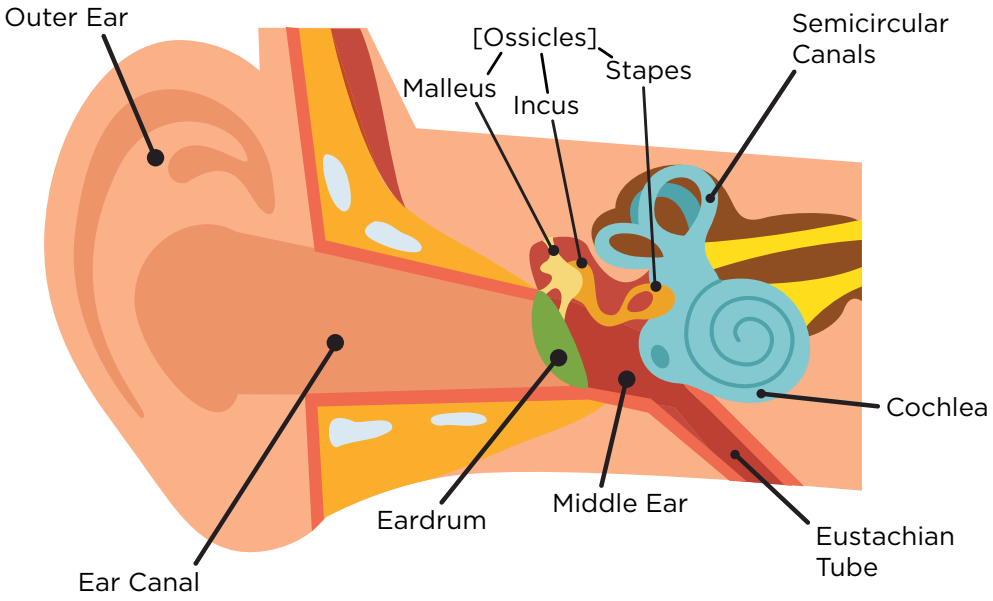


TRY THIS!

Stretch a rubber band between your thumb and forefinger on one hand. Pluck it a few times. Can you see and feel the vibrations? What happens if you pluck the rubber band harder? Softer? Change the shape of the rubber band by making it longer and thinner. What do you hear?

THE OUTER EAR

This is the only part of your ear that you can see. Your outer ear has two jobs: to collect the sound and protect the rest of the ear. Invisible sound waves travel through the air and enter the outer ear through the canal. The canal is the opening in your ear. The outer ear also makes earwax.



THE MIDDLE EAR

After sound waves travel through the canal, they reach your middle ear. The middle ear turns the sound waves into vibrations before it sends them to the inner ear. Sound passes through your eardrum and three tiny bones called ossicles. Each ossicle has a name. They are the malleus (hammer), the incus (anvil), and the stapes (stirrup). The eardrum is a thin piece of skin attached to the hammer. The hammer is attached to the anvil and the anvil is attached to the stirrup. When these three tiny bones vibrate, sound is passed on to the inner ear.

DID YOU KNOW? Earwax (the yellowish stuff that forms in your ears) is your friend! It protects the rest of the parts of your ear from getting dirt in them.

THE INNER EAR

Once vibrations enter your inner ear, they travel to the cochlea. The cochlea is a small, curled tube. It is shaped like a snail's shell. It is filled with liquid and lined with millions of tiny hairs. Vibrations cause the liquid and the hairs to move. Then the hairs change the sound into nerve signals for your brain. The brain interprets the nerve signals and tells you what sound you are hearing.

DID YOU KNOW? The ossicles are the three smallest bones in your body. The stapes is the tiniest of all!

THE BALANCING ACT

Your ears do more than just hear... they also help keep you standing upright! Three small loops are located directly above the cochlea. The loops are called the semi-circular canals. They help us maintain our balance. The semi-circular canals tell your brain the position of your head – is it looking up? Turned to the left? Your brain determines where your head is and then keeps the rest of your body in line.

Try this! Fill a cup halfway with water. Move the cup around a bit, then stop. Notice how the water keeps swishing around even after the cup is still. Sometimes this happens in your semi-circular canals when you spin around very fast. The fluid that continues to move around in your ear is what makes you feel dizzy!

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRAINED VOICE

Singing in Europe and America is now generally divided into two categories: classical and popular. What most people think of as operatic or classical singing developed in Europe hundreds of years ago. This style flourished during the seventeenth century, as opera became a popular form of entertainment and operatic music increased in complexity. The most recognizable characteristics of a classically trained voice are:

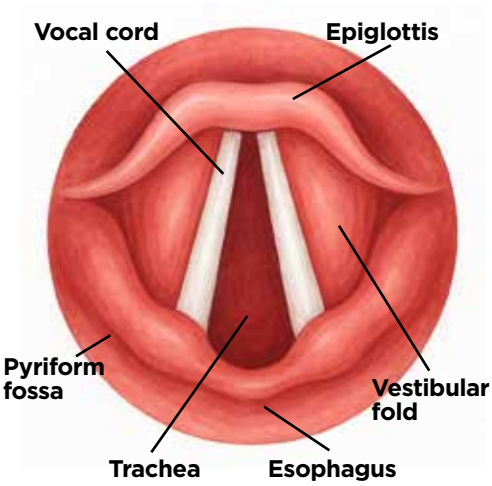
- an extensive range (the ability to sing both high and low)
- varying degrees of volume (loud and soft)
- resonance in the chest and sinus cavities (produces a full or round sound)
- an ability to project or fill a large space without amplification

TRAINING

Very few people are born with the capability to sing this way. Classical singers take voice lessons about once a week and practice every day for many years in order to develop a beautiful operatic sound. In fact, most trained voices are not mature enough to perform leading roles on a big stage until they're at least 25 years old. Compare that with the most popular singers on the radio today who could release their first albums as teenagers!

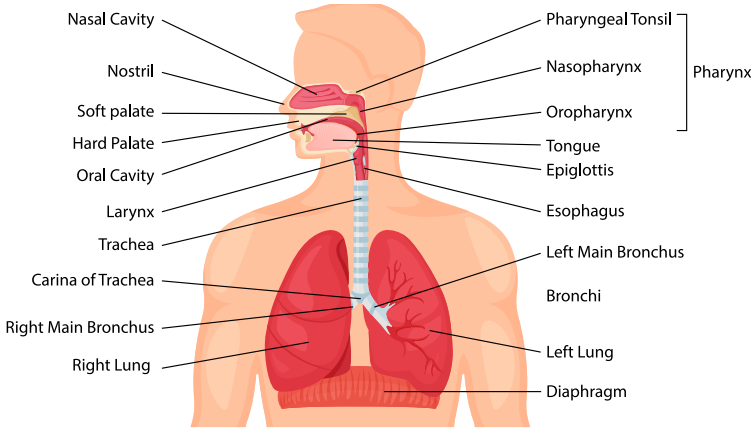
THE VOCAL CORDS

Science tells us that all sound is made by two things vibrating together. The same concept applies when we talk or sing. The sounds we make are really just the vibration of two little muscles called the vocal cords. The vocal cords are held in the larynx, which is sometimes called the voicebox or the Adam's Apple. These two little cords of tissue vary in length but are typically between 1 and 2 inches long. When you want to say something, your brain tells your vocal cords to pull together until they're touching lightly. Then, air pushes through them, and the vocal cords begin to vibrate, opening and closing very quickly. This vibration creates a sound. The pitches you sing are dependent on the speed at which the cords vibrate. A faster vibration creates a higher pitch. The length of the cords also affects the pitch of the voice. Longer cords equal a lower voice.



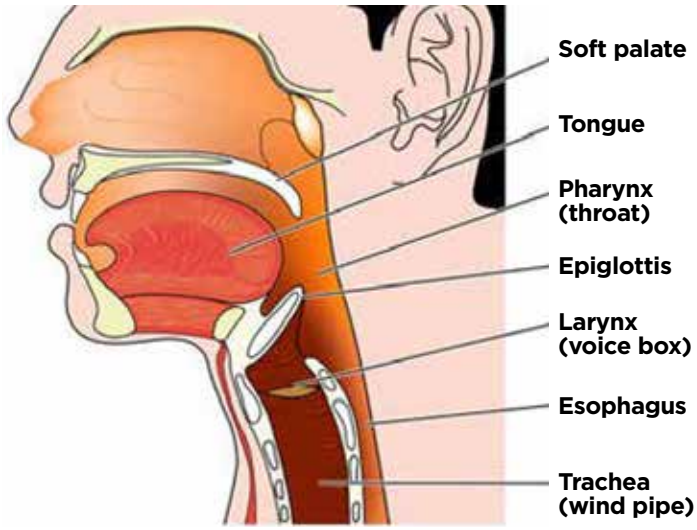
BREATHING / SUPPORT

In order to sing long phrases with a lot of volume and a good tone, singers must breathe in a specific manner, making use of the entire torso area (lungs, ribs, diaphragm and viscera). As they breathe in, each part of this network does its job: the lungs fill up with air, which forces the ribs to expand and the diaphragm (a flat muscle below the lungs) to move down. As the diaphragm descends, the viscera (stomach, intestines and other organs) are forced down and out. Singers describe this feeling as fatness in the low stomach or filling an inner- tube around their waist. Expelling the air, or singing, is essentially a slow and controlled movement of those muscles. If all of the air escapes from the lungs quickly, the tone of the voice will sound breathy and will lack intensity. Successful opera singers must be able to isolate the diaphragm and ribs, controlling the rate at which they return to their original positions. This allows for a consistent stream of air that travels from the lungs, through the larynx and out of the mouth.



RESONANCE

One of the most obvious characteristics of an operatic voice is a full, resonant tone. Singers achieve this by lifting their soft palate. This is a part of the mouth that most people don't ever think about and can be difficult to isolate. Here are some simple exercises to feel where it is and hear the resonance in your voice when you lift it: Start to yawn. Feel that lifting sensation in the back of your mouth? That is the soft palate going up. With a relaxed mouth, slide your tongue along the roof of your mouth, from your teeth back toward your throat. You should feel your tongue go up, then down (that's your hard palate), then back up again. That soft, fleshy area at the very back is your soft palate.



TRY THIS!

Say the word "who" like you would say it in normal conversation. Now, say "hoooo" like a hoot owl. Can you hear the difference? Say the sentence "How do you do?" as if you were British. Lifting the soft palate is the foundation for the resonance in a singer's voice. With a lot of practice, a singer can lift their palate as soon as they begin to sing, without even thinking about it.



The Atlanta Opera's 2008 mainstage production of *Cinderella* at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre featured Jennifer Larmore in the title role. (photo: Tim Wilkerson)

In the opera, Governor Santoro explained that the Nuevas Voces Scholarship was for young leaders who used their creativity and generosity to make a real impact on their communities. Ella used her talents as a musician to volunteer at senior centers and children's hospitals. **What if we can take her compassionate spirit out into OUR community?** Explore local organizations connected to themes in *Cinderella: The Remix Opera*, starting with the ones below:

A.G. RHODES GENERATION CONNECT

A.G. Rhodes offers compassionate rehabilitation therapy and residential care for seniors in metro Atlanta.

Generation Connect: A week-long summer camp designed to foster intergenerational relationships between teens and elders through volunteer projects, oral history initiatives, social activities, and workshops focusing on careers in healthcare.

Day-to-Day Volunteer Opportunities: Shadow and assist senior care practitioners through programs like Songs for Seniors, Seeds for Seniors, and Pet Therapy.

ATLANTA MUSIC PROJECT

This non-profit transforms the lives of young people through world-class music training, extraordinary performance opportunities, and comprehensive college and career preparation.

After School Training and Ensemble Groups: Tuition-free music programs focusing on classical and Afro-Diasporic music genres taught by industry professionals.

Volunteering and Peer Mentorship: High school aged creatives can volunteer to support youth choirs, orchestras, and college-preparatory initiatives.

FOUNDATION FOR HOSPITAL ART

Based in Woodstock, Georgia, the Foundation for Hospital Art focuses on creating artwork for hospitals by involving both patients and volunteers worldwide.

In-Studio Volunteer work for children aged 12 and older.

"Painting Hearts" Groups: Student-led volunteer groups.

HOW BIG IS YOUR DREAM FOUNDATION

Founded by musician and advocate **Jorel "JFly,"** the How Big is Your Dream Foundation creates, delivers, and evolves the promotion, education and development of youth in all sectors of music and the entertainment industry through programs such as:

M.A.D.E (Music Arts Diversity & Entertainment) Program: Early artist mentorship in musical arrangement, dance choreography, and production techniques.

P.A.I.D (Putting Aside Individual Differences) Program: Aiding young artists in setting and achieving personal, academic, and entertainment career goals.

LOS NIÑOS PRIMERO

Founded by Venezuelan immigrant **Martitza Morelli** to empower young Latinx creatives in metro Atlanta through peer mentorship, cultural engagement, and scholarship opportunities. They encourage year-round student engagement in art, music, theatre, and dance, fostering creativity while enhancing cultural connections and pride in identity.

Youth Volunteer Opportunities: Summer Education Program and Saturday School Classes

Orchestra, Chorus, and Dance Ensembles: Connecting young artists to professional Latinx artists for traditional and contemporary artforms, including folkloric, flamenco, and hip-hop instruction.

Creciendo Juntas: A peer arts mentorship initiative that connects participants in bi-monthly creative workshops.



Samuel Ferreira and Brandi Diggs perform for students at Baldwin Elementary School in the 2019 Atlanta Opera Studio tour presentation of *The Bilingual Barber of Seville*. (photo: The Atlanta Opera Archives)

THANKS FOR HAVING US!

Let these questions inspire the conversations on the way back home or to your classroom.

FIVE FOR THE DRIVE

Forgiveness: Even before Ella's fortune is discovered, she still helps and forgives Claire for lying. Why do you think Ella chose forgiveness? Would you?

Belonging: Throughout the opera, several characters disguise themselves or pretend to be someone they are not. How does pretending to be someone else help (or hurt) them? By the end of the opera, what does it seem like it really means to belong?

Resilience: Ella introduces us to the phrase "betting on yourself." Where do you think she got that mentality from? When in the opera does Ella demonstrate perseverance, resilience, and courage?

Self-Worth: Ramiro ultimately chooses Ella not because of her appearance or wealth, but because of her character. What personality traits demonstrated by characters in the opera stand out to you? How do those qualities change the lives of the people around them?

Integrity and Honesty: Every character has a moment of dishonesty in some way. What is the difference between each character's dishonest moments and what are their reasons? Do you think any of their lies are understandable?



Emily Fons and Santiago Ballerini as Angelina and Don Ramiro in the 2018 Atlanta Opera production of *La Cenerentola* (Photo: Rafterman)

MEDIA CONNECTIONS

What would a DJ and Content Creator be without fierce recommendations on hand? If you liked *Cinderella; The Remix Opera* or the original *La Cenerentola*, check out our picks to keep the party going!

PLAYS & MUSICALS Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, Teatro Vivo's *Cenicienta: A Bilingual Cinderella Story*, Zacarías' *Cinderella: A Salsa Fairytale*, and Gloria Estefan's *Basura*

OPERAS Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*, Rossini's *The Italian Girl in Algiers*

MOVIES & TV *On My Block* (Netflix), *Ella Enchanted* (2004), *Cinderella* (2015), *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* (1997 and 2021), *Princess Protection Program* (2009), *Camp Rock* (2002, 2010)

FRACTURED FAIRYTALES *Interstellar Cinderella* by Deborah Underwood, *Dinorella: A Prehistoric Fairy Tale* by Pamela Duncan Edwards, *Bigfoot Cinderrrrrella* by Tony Johnston, *Sumorella* by Sandi Takayama, *The Glass Voice* by Olivia Snowe, *Cinderella: An Interactive Fairy Tale Adventure* by Jessica Gunderson

TWEEN, TEEN, & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE *Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine, *Mechanica* by Betsy Cornwell, *Just Ella* by Margaret Petereson Haddix, *Geekerella* by Ashley Poston, *Before Midnight* by Cameron Dokey, *Bound* by Donna Jo Napoli

HIP-HOP, DJ, LATIN MUSIC, & CONTENT CREATION BOOKS *The DJ Books* by Edwin Rios, *Welcome to the Cypher* by Khodi Dill, *Dancing Hands: How Teresa Carreno Played the Piano for President Lincoln* by Margarita Engle (Venezuela), *How to be a Blogger and Vlogger in 10 Easy Lessons* by Shane Birley, *So You Wanna Be A DJ* by Michelle Anderson

PERFORMANCE GUIDE CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

PREPARING FOR THE OPERA
- ELA: Grades 2-8 Narrative Techniques (2-5.TT.1)
- FINE ARTS: Grades 2-8 Connecting theatre experiences to life and other content areas; Grades K-12 engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member (TA.K-HS.RE.1)

MEET THE CHARACTERS
- ELA: Grades 2-8 Narrative Techniques (2-5.TT.1)
- FINE ARTS: K-4 Comprehension of basic theatre vocabulary (TAK-4.CR.1.e); 6-12 Interpreting character traits, motivation, objectives, and relationships for characters (TA6-12.CR.1.b-d

CREATING *LA CENERENTOLA*
- ELA: Grades 6-12 informational text comprehension and analysis L6-8WHST9; Grades 6-12 historical research skills
- SOCIAL STUDIES: Grades 6-8 social studies reading comprehension (L6-8RHSS10)
- FINE ARTS: Grades 6-8 Music History (MSGM6-8.CN.2); Grades 9-12 Exploring the works of milestone works
- TAHSFT.CN.2.a-c); Grades 4-8 Theatre history (TA4-8.CN.2.b)

CENTURIES OF CINDERELLA STORIES
- ELA: Grades 6-12 informational text comprehension and analysis (L6-8WHST9); Grades K-5 Comparing and contrasting stories across cultures, languages, themes, genres, and styles (K-5.T.T.d)
- SOCIAL STUDIES: Grades 6-12 historical research skills

OPERA 101
- ELA: Grades 6-8 Expository techniques (6.TT.1); Grades 2-8 Narrative Techniques (2-5.TT.1); Grades 3-8
- Expository techniques (3.TT.1)
- SOCIAL STUDIES: Grades 6-8 social studies reading comprehension (L6-8RHSS10); Grades 3-8 describing the impacts of European explanation (SS3-8.H2)
- FINE ARTS: Grades 6-8 Music History (MSGM6-8.CN.2); Grades 9-12 Exploring the works of milestone works TAHSFT.CN.2.a-c); Grades 4-8 Theatre history (TA4-8.CN.2.b); Grade 6 genre and style classification (MSGM6. CN.2.a-b); Grade 6 Comparing and Contrasting art forms and principals (MSGM6.CN.1.a); Grades 8-12 Comparing and contracting musical theatre types (TAHSMT.CN.2)

CAREERS IN THE ARTS AND IMPORTANT JOBS
- FINE ARTS: Grades 2-8 connecting theatre to different careers and associated skills (TA2.CN.1), Grades 6-12 investigating career possibilities to dance and other relating fields, Grades 6-12 identifying collaborative roles in technical theatre
- CTAE: Identifying skills and practices associated with different careers (SP-ICC-2)
- MATH: 4th grade generating and analyzing patterns in real-life situations (4.PAR.3 4.NR.4)

MEET THE TEAM BEHIND *CINDERELLA: THE REMIX OPERA*
- FINE ARTS: Grades 2-9 identifying the skills and knowledge needed by various artistic disciplines

OPERATIC VOICES
- FINE ARTS: Grades 5-8 Identifying and distinguishing vocal parts (ESGM5-8.RE.1.e); Grades 4-8 connecting music to other fine arts (ESGM5.RE.1.e)

SCIENCE OF SOUND
- ELA: Using glossaries for new vocab (2.L.V.3.d); Grades 2-8 Narrative Techniques (2-5.TT.1); Grades 3-8 Expository techniques (3.TT.1)
- SCIENCE: Grades 1-8 obtaining information about how sound is made (S1P1); Grades 4-8 on how sounds change (S4P2); Anatomical systems in the body (SAP1)
- FINE ARTS: Basic vocal anatomy, and vocal aspects of range and tone (ESBC.PR.2)

***CINDERELLA: THE REMIX OPERA* IN OUR COMMUNITY**
- SOCIAL STUDIES: Grade 3-5 explaining the necessity of participating in public life (SS3CG2.b)
- LANGUAGE: Foreign Language Native Speakers 1-3 investigating and reinforcing connections between Spanish and social studies and the arts (SNS1.CCC)
- FINE ARTS: Grades 2+ connecting the arts to different careers and associated skills (TA2.CN.1)

POST PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES
- FINE ARTS: Grades 2-8 Connecting theatre experiences to life and other content areas; Grade 6 Comparing and Contrasting art forms and principles (MSGM6.CN.1.a)

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