

A Composite Review of “Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella” by Karen Saar’s 6<sup>th</sup> graders at Roland Park Middle School

*NOTE: The following review was the culmination of a Hippodrome Foundation program conducted at Roland Park Middle School by theater critic J. Wynn Rousuck. The purpose of the program was to teach sixth graders the basics of writing a theater review. Each student was assigned one aspect of the production to focus on: A performance, sets, costumes, songs, etc. The review was compiled by Ms. Rousuck, demonstrating how all of the aspects the students wrote about come together in a single review. The students whose work is included here are:*

*Meira Berlow  
Mara Coughlin  
Jasmine Dorsey  
Sam Fidler  
Sydney Knight-Kelly  
Allie Murray  
Katie Nelson  
Sophie O’Brien  
Josh Pedida  
Stephen Piron  
Julia Suriano  
Jacob Wohlust*

Performance reviewed: Matinee, Thursday, November 3, 2016

I saw “Cinderella” at the Hippodrome. The plot was unique because it added politics, poverty, and forbidden love not just between Cinderella and the Prince. Despite the twists to make the story more interesting, you could detect the original story thanks to the plot not being tinkered with too much.

Playwright Douglas Carter Beane added more characters and added more layers of personality and traits to existing characters.

The story was fantastic with the twist! I like how ordinary people can do something very skilled. The fact that Cinderella -- Tatyana Lubov -- never gives up before the banquet starts might really inspire kids.

Hayden Stanes played the prince. He did well for many reasons. One reason was that he had good facial expression. For example, when the prince and his

army were fighting an enormous praying mantis at the beginning of the show, he showed lots of expression. It showed he was a brave prince. A final example is when he proposes to Cinderella. It is funny and he really kept his focus, despite the audience's laughter.

Marie was played by Leslie Jackson. Marie turned into the Fairy Godmother in the middle of the play. She changed roles from a crazy woman to being the Fairy Godmother. It was cool how she flipped her dress over to switch to the new character. Marie's goal was to help Cinderella believe that she could do anything if she tried. Another goal for Marie was to help Cinderella get to the Ball. I think Marie succeeded in reaching her goals because she tried and put her mind to accomplishing these things.

Composer Richard Rodgers made some songs fast and happy, while others he made sad and slow. For example, the song "The Prince Is Giving A Ball" was very upbeat and fast moving, because everyone was excited to attend the ball. The song "Ten Minutes Ago" was the opposite. Oscar Hammerstein II created the lyrics. Some meanings were easy to pick out, but some meanings were hard to find. The songs let you understand the musical more.

The songs were very good. However, I thought that there were too many songs that didn't add anything of value to the production. I loved the song "Impossible" because it was such a light tune and the transformations (for example, the pumpkin changing into a carriage and four mice changing into horses) were very cool. In order to make this show appeal to modern crowds they added lots of things to the production. They added four new songs that I think were needed to make the play understandable, but I think they should have taken out four other ones to be able to put in the four they added.

The sets, designed by Anne Louizos, were beautiful. For example, the first scene, the woods, had gorgeous lighting, fog, and the trees. The lights were in multiple colors and the trees were tall and lifelike. My least favorite set was the kingdom where Prince Topher sat. It was just three cloths hanging from the ceiling. It had boring lighting and just wasn't exciting.

The sets really made me get a feel for where they were. For example, the town center led me to know what the city was like. The fog and lighting also contributed by being able to change the mood of the characters and audience.

You could tell the costume designer, William Ivey Long, really worked hard on this show. Cinderella changing from rags to magical dresses made the audience cheer and clap. The costumes matched the characters' personalities.

I really loved Cinderella's costume because it went from being poor to rich. The ball gown was pearly white and the banquet gown was shiny gold. Her poor dress had rags on it because she couldn't wear fancy dresses like her stepmother and stepsisters because her stepmother didn't care about her.

Each and every one of the costumes was special in its own way. The poor people's costumes had a very worn-out, old-timey look. All of the upper class people, like the two stepsisters, had very large poofy dresses. The upper class men, like Prince Topher, were very nicely put together and clean/classy looking.

I would recommend this play. There were excellent lessons that could help others. I was inspired by the characters in this play. They performed well together. They were showing us how to believe in yourself and to not say, "I can't." This is an important lesson for all.