

# La Cenerentola

**GIOACHINO ROSSINI** / 1817

**SUNG IN ITALIAN**  
**APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME: 154 minutes**

Revisiting the old Cinderella's tale gave young Rossini the chance to release his whole potential and crazy talents, translating his colourful universe into a play that, throughout its story, many directors have found extremely challenging to stage.

This opera, renowned for the stunning beauty and complexity of its mezzo and soprano's arias, was composed by Rossini when he was just 25 and premiered at Teatro Valle in Rome on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1817. The libretto was written by Jacopo Ferretti and it is based on the fairytale Cenerentola by Perrault which the Italian librettista has stripped of supernatural elements and slightly modified in order to obtain a Cinderella which is, over all, more fragile and more harshly tormented by her family and whose goodness will eventually help triumph. Angelina's role (Cinderella) was composed for a coloratura contralto but nowadays is very often interpreted by a mezzo. The opera is also rich in humour due to a number of comic situations created by funny characters.



Joyce DiDonato in the main character  
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## MAIN CHARACTERS

**Angelina**, or **Cenerentola**, stepdaughter of Don Magnifico (contralto)

**Don Ramiro**, Prince (tenor)

**Don Magnifico**, Baron (basso)

**Dandini**, Don Ramiro's valet (baritone)

**Alidoro**, prince's tutor (basso)

**Tisbe**, Angelina's step sister (mezzo-soprano)

**Clorinda**, Angelina's step sister (soprano)

## THE PLOT

Rossini's plot shares a few elements with the original by Perrault; Cinderella gets mistreated by her family, she falls in love with a boy she thinks the Prince's valet and she also sneaks in the great ball. The valet turns out to be the prince himself and after Cinderella's runaway he will use a bracelet she handmade for him instead of a crystal shoe to find her. Masks will eventually be dropped, letting kindness and love triumph!

### Act 1

The story begins at Don Magnifico's house, where daughters Clorinda and Tisbe are continuously arguing over who is the prettiest, while other daughter Angelina lives like a homeless and gets regularly abused and mistreated by the whole family. At the palace, Prince Ramiro is looking to get a wife and order his tutor Alidoro to see to it. Dressed up as a beggar, Alidoro, goes to Magnifico's, but instead of letting him in he sends him away, Angelina is the only one treating the beggar in disguise with respect. Later on, the Prince himself, Disguised as a valet, shows up at Magnifico's door and instantly falls in love with Angelina who is also impressed by his beauty. Then, squirrel Dandini, dressed up as the prince, enters and courts the evil sisters inviting them to the Ball. Angelina wants to partake as well and literally supplicates her father to let her, but he refuses. However, Alidoro helps Angelina getting properly dressed up and after covering her face he lets her sneak in the ball. Back at the palace, the prince, still disguised as his valet, speaks his own mind about the two horrible sisters and falls in love with a mysterious stranger, queerly familiar to him.

### Act 2

At supper, atmosphere is thick, Prince is sure he has already seen the mysterious girl who kindly refuses Dandini's advances-who's still disguised as a prince- telling him she's in love with the valet. When Ramiro overhears the girl's confession asks for her hand right away and, in turn, she gives him a handmade bracelet as a present asking him to meet up again at her place, and then runs away. Later on, Prince Ramiro recognises Angelina while at Magnifico's house and asks for her hand. The opera ends at the palace where Don Magnifico is forgiven and virtues together with love and goodness triumph!

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